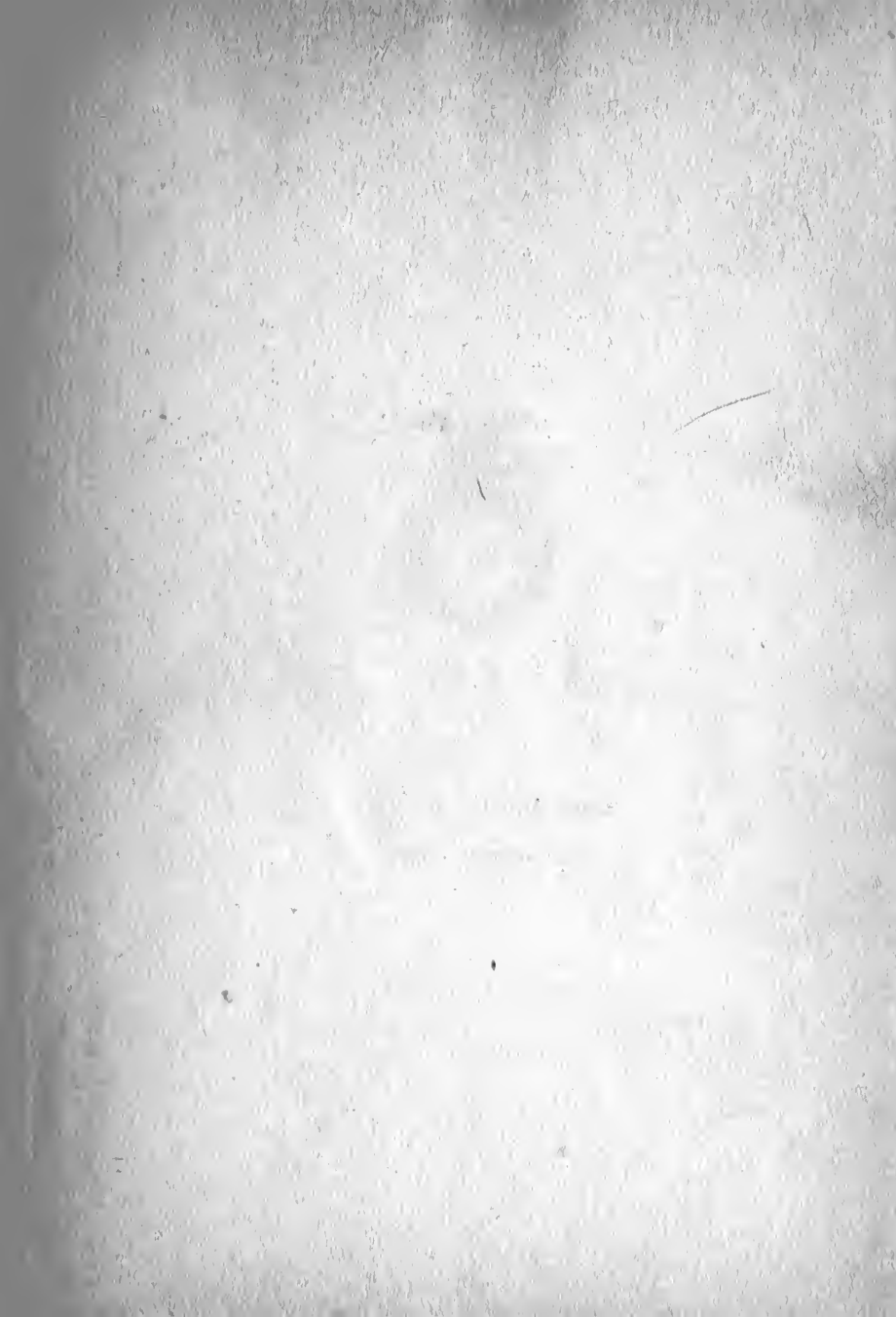


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Caroline M. Butterfield.

JACOB



AND OTHER POEMS

BY

CAROLINE M. BUTTERFIELD, A.B.



Denver.

Published by
THE WORLD SUPPLY AND PUBLISHING CO.
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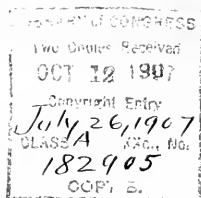
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D. K. 244, 18 1/30

TO MY HUSBAND
*this volume is
affectionately dedicated.*

PROEM.

The many-colored robe of Beauty trails
In brodered folds across my world of sense.
A humble worshipper her meek eyes veils
And bows to earth before God's providence.

But those sweet visions, fleeting as the day
Still linger like soft perfumes in my dreams,
Till I would fain refashion in my lay
The radiance that so richly round me streams.

The flowers that fell from generous Beauty's hands,
I weave with artless touch but earnest care
To garlands, longing by their changeeful strands
To bless some other in his need somewhere.

I cannot forge to glowing words the fire
Of heavenly love in earth's great altar-flame,
But bring my fragments, wrought with great desire
To speak the splendor of a matchless Name.
Denver, Colo., June, 1907.

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JACOB



PROLOGUE.

Out of the great unknown, where shadows veil
Unspoken mysteries, the child is born.
On Nature's kindly bosom he finds ease,
And his unskillful fingers slowly wind
From off her shining looms the thread of life.
His eyes grow used to her broad fields and plains,
To her e'er-changing splendor of the sky,
And gifts down-dropping from her generous hands.
As she spreads all her stores to bless his sight,
Like liegeman for his lord, or maid for queen,
He holds that all is his—until some might
Contests his tenure and he must withdraw
His eyes' unbounded sovereignty. But still
He gains by loss; the zest of struggle and
The joy of comradeship with those who toil
Are his. He joins with others in the quests
Of earth, and spends Time's hurrying hours with friends.

Then Life, who laid so much low at his feet
In childhood, brings her haughty claim as one,
Who, having cast aside the garb of slave,
Now dons the rightful dress of royal queen;
And the young monarch who so proudly held
The scepter of his helplessness in hand,
Now shoulders time-long burdens and performs,
Unquestioning, the tasks that must be done,
No matter what light breeze of pleasure blows.
He bows to love in service, heavenly sweet,

He bows to hunger, cold, to custom's claim.
All his long days are spent from dawn to dark,
In manhood's earnest efforts to attain
The utmost sum of service unto all
The claims that, like old giants of the void,
Have laid their hold upon him.
Strange Nature never wears an even face,
Or if she seems to, still her heart is changed
Through every day, to somewhat other form.

When the rich blessings, worth the pent-up powers
Of life to keep them, fade by some fierce breath,
Dry as the rainless desert, then the confident heart,
That rested in the might of hand and brain,
Bows as the willow bows to the north-wind,
To forces mightier than his little strength.
And as he looks down the slow, failing years
That lie between him and Life's setting sun,
He sees the treasures of his heart go down
Into the gloom and silence of the unknown.
But far across the clouds betokening night
A radiant beam of hope sweeps, bright and clear,
From a golden sunset-gate that seems to lead
Into a brilliant land of gold and good,
Beyond the cloudy shadow of the night.

Although he sees the treasures that must pass
Beyond his reach, and years that grow less worth
For service; that long ray of light
Brings him so near the realms of the Beyond,
He knows no loss is final and no toil
Will ever lose its rightful recompense,

No love will ever miss its prize—true love,
When all is over.

Like the changeful notes
Of some vast organ, strong, majestic, sweet,
Swelling to heights of splendid melody,
And sinking into minors, grave and sad,
Or keeping steady pace 'midst gay and calm
Of changing over, undertones, is life;
And like the organ, all it seems to say
Is but a tame and common paraphrase
Of what must e'er in this world be unsaid.

December, 1906.



I.

"And the boys grew."

By the bountiful well of Lahai-roi fed Isaac's fat herds.
The boys born to bless him there prattled their first childish
words;

And Isaac rejoiced in the laughter and mirth of his sons,
There was hope for their mother and him in those dear little
ones.

They grew; they were constantly changing, each unlike the
other,

But each adding beauty and life to the life of his brother.
Each played at the games which he loved the best; Esau's the
chase,

The bow and the unerring arrow, the swift, breathless race;
For Jacob the household, the kine and the field could suffice,
And the wonderful tale of his grandfather's long sacrifice.

He was but an unwilling huntsman when Esau beguiled
Him forth to the chase, for the fierce joy of slaughter, too mild.
But dull was the tower of the keeper to Esau's hot blood;
His hasty, impetuous spirit found sport in the flood,

The whirlwind, the bare waste of desert, the wild boar's fierce
fight,
The eagle aloft in the dawning, the lark's dizzy flight.
He foraged at will and at will brought the slain of his bow,
As fancy lent zest to his goings, swift-footed or slow.

More calm was the nature of Jacob, more lovable too,
Delighting in home's simple comforts as quiet men do.
He loved the soft touch of his mother, he bowed to her will.
She taught him the ways of his fathers and sought to instill
A faith in Jehovah, the God she revered; He who came
With promise of infinite good unto Abraham, fame
And a race like the sands, that should bless all the nations
to be.

"The seal of His favor was set on my coming," said she,
"As the bride of thy father to share in your great destiny."
The boy's heart was filled with deep homage to Him who had
kept

His grand-sire in safety. To him Fate's calm eyes never slept
But beamed with strange promises joined to the great ends of
life.

They had their brave strength from the heavens and led him to
strife

For God's best endowments. His heart had the wish to attain
To usefulness, service and help for humanity's gain.
That warm hope he cherished, but Esau was careless of duty,
Nor found in his brother's high fancies the least charm or beauty.

So passed the bright days of their youth; each was full of the
joy

And delight in the future that swells in the heart of a boy.
The father loved Esau with tenderness hearty and deep,

And the son whose wild moods swept a heart that must e'er
laugh or weep

Needed care and compassion from love that would ne'er cease
nor sleep.

The mother, as Isaac saw, gave to the younger her praise,
Her tend'rest caresses, her care and instruction always,
And Esau was left to his father, too oft through long days.
Then Isaac grew fond of his son's wild delight in the chase
And ate of his venison, found in his bold hunter's grace
And the gains from his prowess enough many faults to efface.
He loved all the pleasures of feasting. A plain man was he
Whose dullness was brightened by Esau's unchecked revelry.
Each nature completed the other and years drew them nearer.
For Rebekah and Jacob as well the warm love-ties grew dearer.
The twin sons grew thus in the home, two as one, by their
birth

But never at one in their visions of virtue and worth.
For Esau the paths of the desert forever must be
Life's loftiest way, full of freedom and wild ecstasy;
For Jacob, the purpose of God was the aim which would bear
His will's most courageous endeavor, his heart's deepest care.
He saw what from others was hidden; he heard in his soul
What other men heard not, responded to unseen control.

II.

"Sell me this day thy birth-right."

"The sun-beams are hot on the tent-roof the noon-time draws
nigh;

This red pottage boiled in the pot will my need satisfy."

The fire underneath Jacob stirred while on wandered his thought
O'er his past and the unexplored future whose blessings he
sought.

"The younger by birth and deprived of the right to attain
The heirship, with promises vast and unbounded domain,
By law's heedless force and my sire's will that Esau shall reign,
I long none the less for the heritage granted of God,
To my mother so long ere with child's feet the meadows I trod.
I long to be chief of the people commissioned to bear
A blessing to men which unborn generations shall share.

But Esau neglecting its worth owns the right I desire
And spends on the desert and chase all his arduous fire.
My father still leans upon Esau, has small need of me,
Nor sees in his nature the danger to our destiny.

"He comes from the chase faint with hunger with nothing to
eat.

My pottage of lentils is ready now, savory, sweet.
Its redolent odor his famishing nostrils will greet."

As Jacob set down on the tent-floor his noon-day repast,
The shadow of Esau across the wide entrance was cast.
"Thy dinner is tempting, my brother, my hunger is sore;
Pray give me to eat of thy pottage at once, I implore!

I am starving with hunger from chasing since dawn o'er the
plain.

I am fainting. Thy red pottage feed me, I beg thee again!"

And Jacob said, heeding the powerful plea of his wish,

"Come, sell me thy birthright and take as thy payment the
dish!"

A slave to the moment's insistent demand, Esau said,

"What profits the birthright to me, who am starving for bread?"

"Swear, brother, to sell me the birthright and thine be the
feast!"

Urged Jacob, as hope of success his desire increased.

Then Esau made oath at his hunger's decree and did feed,

Exchanging his right for a moment's impetuous greed,

And eating, passed out to regret in dark hours of despair

The right he despised and to envy his brother, the heir.

III.

"Arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may
bless me."

Now Isaac was aged, his eyes had grown dim with the years.
Gray life slipping from him, bore with her, her manifold cares.
His heart turned to Esau, his eldest; he longed to bestow
A blessing upon him from which, through the years, good might
flow.

He sent for him, waiting his step, bent by Time's heavy touch,
His gray head bowed low o'er his staff, planning, pondering much.

He stretched forth his hand as the son he had summoned drew
nigh.

"My son," he addressed him and Esau replied, "Here am I."
"Lo, now I am old and I know not the day I shall die.
Go take now I pray thee thy weapons, thy quiver and bow,
And bring from thy hunting the venison of the fat doe.
To its savory sweetness thy skill in preparing apply,
And feasting, my soul shall thy blessing pronounce, ere I die."
So Esau went forth.

From the tent of the women, each word
Incautiously spoken, by crafty Rebekah was heard.
The promise of God with the plans of the long years appeared
To be threatened with loss by the fatherly blessing she feared;
Wild Esau who wedded idolatrous wives without care,
Was heedless of God's great commission and would not as heir
Take up the brave life of his fathers nor worthily bear
His part as the chief of their tribe.

Then to Jacob she went
With an aspect in which grief and shrewdness unconsciously
blent.

She told of the blessing to Esau about to be given,
Opposed as it was to God's promise, the will of high Heaven.
She said,

“Now, my son, hear my voice and obey my command.
Go forth to the flock feeding full on the rich meadow land,
And bring me two kids of the goats; I will make savory meat
Which thy father enjoys. Thou shalt carry it to him to eat,
And take with his blessing prophetic the good that is meet.”

In some fear of the outcome, the son replied, “Esau is hairy,
While I am a smooth man. In this deceit I must be wary.
My father may feel me and knowing me as a deceiver,
May curse me, refusing his choice words of blessing and favor.”
His mother said, “Mine be the curse, my son, mine be the harm.
Bring thou of the meat I require, without fear or alarm.”
Rebekah made savory meat as was loved by the sire,
And took goodly raiment of Esau, a young man's desire.
In it she dressed Jacob, put skins of the kids on his hands
And the smooth of his neck.

He had learned how to lie, cool and
bland,
At need. He bore with him the savory meat and the bread,
And seeking to bear himself calmly 'spite all his fierce dread,
He entered the presence of Isaac.

“My father!” he said,
And Isaac replied, “Here am I, and who art thou, my son?”

Then Jacob said, “I am thy first-born; thy bidding is done.
I pray thee, arise now and eat of my fresh venison,
And give me thereafter, my blessing.”

Then Isaac replied,
“How didst thou come on it so quickly?”

The son boldly lied,
"Because the Lord whom thou dost serve gave me speed in the
chase."

Then Jacob was near to discovery, shame and disgrace.

In doubt, Isaac said, "Come thou near, I would feel thee and see
If, son of my comfort, my very son Esau thou be."
Then Jacob drew near unto Isaac his father and held
His treacherous fear in control as his purpose compelled.

"The voice has the accent of Jacob," the puzzled sire said,
"Yet the hands and the neck are like Esau's; indeed I am led
To trust that it is my son Esau, by whom I am fed;
'Twas he sought the deer at my bidding, he now shall receive
The blessing I long to insure him; 'tis he, I believe."

The old man ordered gently, "Come, then, bring the venison here
Which thou hast prepared and fetch also the ruby wine's cheer."
He ate of the savory meat with the pleasure of yore,
But with an old man's fickle appetite; when nothing more
Of food or of drink could delight him, the old father said,

"Come hither and kiss me, my son. Rest again thy dear head
On the breast where through wild years of boyhood for ease
thou hast fled."

And Jacob drew nearer and kissed him. The sire caught the
smell

Pervading his raiment and blessing him said,

"See the smell

Of my son is the smell of a field under God's gracious care
May the Lord's love attend thee and all thy anxieties bear.

"Let God's dew of Heaven descending
Fructify thy corn and wheat,
And the land be fat, thee sending
Wine to drink and food to eat.

"Let the people be thy servants,
Let the nations bow to thee.
Let thy brethren yield observance
Unto all thou shalt decree.

Let the curse be his that curses
Thee or thine, while seasons run.
Rich his blessings who disburses
Blessings on thee, Oh, my son."

Then Jacob withdrew while his heart beat, exultant with joy.
His claim on the birthright and blessing no man could destroy.

In jubilant triumph he scarcely had gone from his sire
When Esau returned, with the hunter's hot ardor afire.
From light-hearted chase of the deer in the woodland he came
With beautiful spoil for a regal repast in his game.
He spent his best skill making ready and cooking the meat,
Then he spoke to his sire,

"Let my father this venison eat,
Enjoying the feast that his son has made haste to prepare
And then by his blessing, my future surround with his care."

Surprise swept the pale face of Isaac. "Who art thou?" he said.

"I am thy son, Esau, thy first-born," the swift answer sped.

A hush lay upon them; some awful misfortune was here.
The bowed form of Isaac was shaken with tremulous fear.
He said,

“Who? Where is he who has venison taken and
brought me,

Has waited upon me and kissed me, for blessing besought me?
Of all that he brought I have eaten ere this and have blessed.
Aye and all through the years he shall be of that blessing
possessed.”

Midst the solemn despair of the moments, there rose a harsh wail
And a bitter teeth-gnashing broke through it, but naught could
avail

Esau's protest; he knew that a final, unchangeable deed
The loss of his right and his brother's advancement decreed.
Then swept through the tent-walls his bitter and heart-broken
cry:

“Bless me, even me, Oh, my father, Oh, pass me not by!”

The base deed of Jacob was clear to them both and no way
Led to hope. The deep loss upon Isaac most heavily lay.
“By subtilty Jacob has taken thy blessing away!”
He groaned.

Esau's anger rose high and his tongue set afire.
“He is rightly named Jacob, a subtle supplanter and liar.
My birthright he took, now my blessing, thus treacherously.
Hast not, Oh my father, reserved any blessing for me?”
With rage and despair struggled longing for all that was gone.
By the face of his sire there was naught could redeem what was
done,

So sadly despondent, so empty of promise it shone,
Confirmed by his words:

"I have made him thy lord, thee to bow
With his brethren in service; on him grain and fruit did bestow.
What is left? For thy welfare and comfort the blessing I gave.
Insuring thy future all honor and gain to the grave.
And, lo, thou hast lost it! What blessing remains still to crave?"
Esau groaned:

"Hast no blessing beside on this dark day, I pray?
Grant a blessing as well unto me, Father, even to me!"
The silence of noon-tide was broken by sobs, as the wail
Of Esau's despair filled the ear with its pitiful tale.
While Isaac gazed on the bowed head of his son, bent with woe,
His heart broke the bonds declared final; his love must o'erflow.
He found then the words benediction and grace to bestow:

•
"Thou shalt dwell amid earth's fatness,
Wet with dew from heaven above;
With thy sword seize its richness
For thy need, where'er thou rove.

Jacob shalt thou service render,
Till the future bring thee power.
Thou shalt burst his yoke asunder
In thy wide dominion's hour."

The best had been said, to what might have been, empty and vain
And Esau went forth dizzy-headed with anger and pain.
"I hate him! I hate him!" He said it again and again.
"Why must he in all things supplant me? Why has he the right
Even then on his side, with a manhood my hate cannot blight?
His mother was ever contriving some favor for him!
My mother!"

The tears made his hot eyes grow suddenly dim.

He thought of how she had neglected him, Jacob caressed,
Of days when the sun did not smile, nor the evening bring rest.
His life had been careless, he knew it, and wild as the deer.
He had not that dull sense of duty his foe would revere.
He blushed as he thought of the heathenish brides he had wed,
Whose worship of idols to slight of Jehovah had led.
He envied his brother, still free to pursue at his will
In marriage and life what his loftiest hopes might fulfill.

The things he had lost passed before him; had lost without heed
Of the means to preserve them, without self-denial, indeed.
The life unattained seemed to touch him as softly it passed,
Unsought, wanting fitting ideal in present or past,
Not desired at all till his dull eyes were opened at last.
He saw most the things he had failed of, which all men can see,
His loss of dominion, the yoke that would gall bitterly,
And he rose to his height from the force of his fury's white heat
Inflamed, and he swore as he thought of the mourning made meet
By the death of his father, to wait till that sad day was past,
Then wreak all his long-restrained vengeance on Jacob, at last.
He would meet with the treacherous heir to the coveted right
Of his blessing two-fold and would slay him by his arm's strong
might.

IV.

"This is none other but the house of God and this is the gate of heaven."

From the height of his wild exultation at gaining the prize,
Jacob's spirit sank low as he thought of his brother's surprise,
Of his anger, his hate, vengeful thoughts that would burn in his
soul,
Disturbing his own life with evils beyond his control.

'Mid his trouble, Rebekah brought news of the purpose to slay
His brother which comforted Esau; forbidding delay
She urged him to hasten at once from the danger away.
"My son, heed my words," she besought him, "Thou must indeed flee
To Laban, my brother, at Haran; with him thou shalt be
In safety from Esau's strong arm, from his fierce cruelty.
There stay till the furious tempest of his bitter hate
In calm-bringing days of forgetfulness somewhat abate.
When hope-wingéd peace to his heart shall with blessing descend
Then will I send word for your coming, yes eagerly send,
For why should I lose ye in strife, ye on whom I depend?"

With Isaac she pleaded for Jacob's good, that of their race,
And the need of a bride who should never their future debase:
"Since Esau has wedded the Hittites' idolatrous maids,
The curse of these daughters of Heth all my long hours pervades.
If Jacob should give up at last to their amorous charms,
What worth were my life which this unceasing danger alarms?
The life of the chase and the desert no nation can rear.
Must the worship of God bear the evils surrounding us here?

If we pay no heed to our duty, at last shall despair,
Bring us, spite of God's mercy, the wild fruits of sorrow and
care."

Then Isaac called Jacob in council, forbade that he choose
Any Canaanite bride, their beloved holy faith to refuse.
Then passing by ominous rumors of blood to be shed,
He sent him to Haran, a daughter of Laban to wed.

"Now God the Almighty be with thee and bless thee," he said,
"And multiply thee to a host, make thee fruitful and strong,
And give thee the good that to Abraham's seed shall belong;
So shalt thou inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger,
On thy grand-sire bestowed by God's promises."

Fearing the danger

Jacob fled from the face of his brother, an exile from home,
Its shelter and comfort foregoing, in exile to roam,
Afar from his mother's caresses, afar from her care
Which seized on each good for her son as a treasure most rare.

He fled through his home-land lamenting for all he had lost,
The present, the future his treacherous ardor had cost.
Yet, spite of the sin that had left its deep mark on his way,
O'er his dark-visaged future, God's merciful love sent its ray.
Imagining what might befall in the hidden unknown
He still trusted Life would bring gifts to a wandering son
Of Jehovah, set forth on her quests, without friends and alone;
For he toiled on his way, with no cohort of soldiers his guide,
No camel to bear him, no servant to wait at his side.

The night settled dark o'er the hill-slopes, the sunset's last glow

Had lost its gay-colored magnificent, vanishing show.
The stately stars came and were marshalled in silent array
On the broad fields of heaven, light-shorn by the monarch of day.
The calm hush of evening descended; the bird-cries were still,
The bleat of the sheep, huddled close in the fold on the hill.
Secure from the wolf and the robber, in shelter they lay
In peaceful repose till their summons at breaking of day.
The hoot of an owl broke the stillness, with wierd sudden cry.
The flap of a bat's pinion, silent and dark, struck the eye
Alert for the dangers that lurking on wild hill-slopes lie.
With a stone for his pillow, the heavens his shelter and guard,
Jacob trusted his life to the all-seeing care of the Lord.
He slept, with the planets as watchers, in undisturbed peace,
From life's cares and troubles unshackled by sleep's sweet
release.

As he slumbered there came to his soul a celestial vision,
Remote as the far distant stars from his lonely condition;
Jehovah, beholding the lot of the heir of his race,
His need of encouragement, comfort, of fresh faith and grace,
Bestowed His own presence upon him in that lonely place.
Jacob dreamed that a ladder arose to the heaven's far height,
An angelic throng made their way up and down in the night,
While above in unspeakable splendor, Jehovah appeared,
And loneliness fled at His presence, his heart glowed, was
cheered.

"I am the Lord God of thy grand-father,' so He began,
"The God known to Isaac, thy father, and to Abraham.
The land where thou liest, I give unto thee and thy seed;
And they shall increase to a populous nation indeed,
As the dust of the earth in their multitude, I have decreed.
To the west, to the east, to the north, to the south shall they

spread,

And all men be blessed in the race from thine ancestry led.
Behold I am with thee, wherever thou goest, to keep
Thy life in the dark hour of danger, in pain howe'er deep,
To bring thee again to this land, where to-night thou dost sleep,
To leave thee no more, till the promise I make is fulfilled."

The strange ladder disappeared slowly midst radiance mild.
No longer the angels ascended, no longer appeared
The vision majestic in splendor. The God whom he feared
Was gone, but the glory still lingered and still his heart cheered.

He suddenly roused from his slumber in terror and said,
"Jehovah is in this place surely; I tremble with dread
At the night's awful vision. The great God of heaven was here.
The God of our fathers. How awful this place is! In fear
I stand in the house of Jehovah, His greatness revere.

The gate of the regions eternal has opened for me.
The glory of God and His grandeur, my dazed eyes still see.
This place is God's house, where His justice and holiness dwell.
This place is heaven's gate; for His unworthy servant 'tis well."

At dawn he arose and anointed his pillow of stone
As an altar to God with one worshipper, reverent, alone.
The past and the need of the future in God's hand he laid,
And in the assurance of guidance and favor, he said,

"God of my fathers, Thou who gave
Thy spirit in their sinful time,
Who Abraham, my sire didst save
From low-aimed idol-worship's crime;

Thou who hast kept in service pure
My father Isaac in his day;
To his descendants dost insure
Blessing for all our need alway,
In all my wandering be with me,
Keep and provide with raiment, food,
And some day bring me graciously
In peace unto my sire's abode.
Be thou with me, Oh Lord, my God,
And I will be forever Thine,
Will bow beneath Thy guiding rod,
And make Thy will and service mine.
This pillar as Thy house I raise.
The tenth of all I will bestow,
In faithful effort Thee to praise,
And Thine all-wise approval know."

V.

"Then Jacob went on his journey and came into the land of the people of the east."

In the heart of the desert, the sun shining hot on his head,
Jacob toiled on his way, bearing with him his skin-flask and bread.

Thus, day after day, through the desert's fierce heat he had gone,
While the sand-plains like seas stretched from rising to setting of sun.

He followed the course over which the few caravans went
In barbaric splendor, on some gainful embassy sent,
And found, like green islands at sea in an ocean of sand,
The far-scattered oases, blessing the flowerless land.
These were his nights' lodgings, and here after long thirsty days,
He drank and found shelter beneath the long glossy green rays
Of the palms.

In the desert, the hills and the skies he rejoiced,
And heard as a flute's sweetest melody bird-notes clear-voiced.

The desolate wastes brought their stories of loss to his mind.
No flock of his father could here smallest pasturage find,
No wheat-field grow yellow, 'neath summer's soft billowing wind.
The bustard, the raven and eagle must hunt far and near
Their maintenance scanty, as well must the white fox and deer.
Here the space and the silence of earth's bygone ages held sway,
Here the far-stretching distance led thought o'er the sand-plains
away,

Till losing the force of its striving but impotent flight,
It settled again to the narrowest limits of sight.
The sand's yellow monotone dulled the eye, constantly seeking

Some token of life and companionship, pleasure bespeaking,
And down from the wild, barren slopes of the untrodden plain
Fell the eye in despondence to follow the slow train again.
When night drew her veil across the wild face of the day
And scattered the stars o'er the wide floor of heaven, the way
Was done until morning.

At night Jacob thought of the shrine
His hands had upreared and his faith in the vision divine
He had seen on the calm night at Bethel, God's voice spoke
again

With promises sweet in his ear and the length of the plain
Was not without end to his vision, his journey not vain.

He loved the free life of the desert; the blood of his race
Filled his veins with its impulsive throbbings and wild hunter's
pace.

Its free, fitful charm had besought him long since to defy
The whispers he hearkened to, calling to high destiny.
Its spell lay upon him now, day after day, and he knew
Why Esau fled toil's dreary furrows to feel it anew.
But calmly the future called to him; he straightway was free,
Like Samson, long after, destroying his withes easily.
The future's great promise allured him as some golden goal
Allures the brave seeker for fortune.

There rose in his soul
The thought of his grand-sire, the man who went forth from his
kin

Not knowing the way of his going, through faith all the win.
From Haran's idolatrous usages Abraham went
To the unpeopled plain and the innocent life of the tent.
He had heard the calm voice of Jehovah, and heeding His call
Had broken the strong ties of friendship and kinship, left all

To obey the great God whom he worshipped and live without blame.

'Twas over this desert his grand-father's caravans came
In search of the land his descendants should own through his
name.

He journeyed as Jacob remembered, with Sarai, his wife,
With Lot and his household and sought the great end of his life,
The land God should give him, led on by the simplest belief.
His grand-sire's calm faith touched his heart like a warm ray of
light

For he did not evade some fierce foe that pursued him in flight,
But trod the wild desert pursuing the pathway of right.
Away from all lands he had known did he journey, no dear
friends to meet,
To a strange land of enemies traveled his unflagging feet.

"Much easier I," Jacob said, "to my uncle can go,
To the land where my grand-father dwelt and whose story I
know,
To kindred to whom all the youth of my mother is dear
Her girlhood's gay innocent grace with its beauty and cheer.
To journey the way that she traveled my father to wed
Makes short the dull hours and casts fancy's bright spell o'er
my head
Of scenes strange and beautiful, times that are long ago gone,
That with Eliezer and happy Rebekah have flown.

And the future! No bride for my grand-father waited. He
found
In Ur, the far east-land the bride whom with loving he crowned.
I seek for a fair bride in Haran, I who have foregone

Forty years life's best joy, beloved wife and dear home of my
own.

No daughter of Heth could entice me to forfeit the claim
Which God has upon me. My bride will revere His great name.

In the east I shall find her, the pearl of my heart and my joy;
The wife of my dreams; sunny hope the years could not destroy;
The friend who shall share all the good that the future bestows
In the promise fulfilled; Hebron's lily; Beersheba's rose.

I know not the grace of her figure; the tint of her cheek;
The fall of her eye-lid; the voice in whose tones she will speak;
I know not the colors she loves, nor her garment's soft folds,
The thoughts that are dear to her mind, the quaint fancies she
holds;

But deeply I know I shall love her, with love long-restrained,
Pouring forth in its wealth for her pleasure what my soul has
pained.

I haste o'er the desert to find her, sweet love of my soul,
Knowing well that I cannot without her live life's perfect whole."

VI.

"And Jacob served seven year for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days for the love he had to her."

"The green grass is thick on the slopes and the sheep feed their fill.

The shade of the terebinth draws me to rest on the hill."

Said Rachel, and leaving her crook by the tree, down below
She slipped to the grass-plot at ease and gave fancy full flow.

"How cool is this breeze on my forehead, how calm is the day!
The fleecy clouds flit o'er the meadows of heaven away,
Like sheep browsing on from the dawn till the shadows appear.
Unheeded by shepherd they wander, now distant, now near.
What herbage delicious they gather, I wonder, what air
All fresh from the plains of wide heaven they breathe! To
compare

With the breezes of Aram, so full of delight, they must bear
One who breathes them to happiness free and to life without
care.

I should like to speed with them across the broad fields of the
sky,

And see how the earth looks as borne on the wild winds I'd fly.
The best land and life I would seek in my glad liberty.

I would find what I long for, a life full of purpose and use.

I would make me a future as fair as a maiden might choose.

I would flit, like the clouds to the place where my fancy might
lead,

And choose me a comrade, in all things a comrade indeed.

"I like not these shepherds of Aram, these sons of the plain.

Some art undiscovered has failed them; they woo me in vain.
Some grace of appearance, some brave power of will they have
not

Which dulls the gay charm of their youth and makes humdrum
their lot.

From all the tame life of to-day some new freedom must come;
The mists of the future hide forces to bear me from home;
For somewhere I fancy a rainbow-hued future for me,
Above the calm level of common-place things that I see.
My father persistently adds to his flocks and his herds
As if every one is red gold and rare pleasure affords.
My mother is aged and worn from the cares of the home
And Leah's meek toiling for gain makes the rebel tears come
To my eyes, for I hate this long drudgery; and I alone
See our tread-mill existence and stretch shackled arm to the sky.
I fight not with gain but I miss from our household the joy
That comes when love lends its sweet grace to each moment's
employ,

That radiant love, sprung from a kin-ship of thought and of soul,
With cheer for the hour's passing duties and comfort through all
The changes of life, whether joy, ease or trouble befall.

"But high stands the sun in the heavens, the hot noon draws
nigh;

I must go with my sheep to the well for their noon-day supply
Of water for which all the neighboring herdsmen await,
In turn at the well, all dry thirst from that pure source to sate."
So Rachel passed down, her sheep following each in his place.
Sweet shepherdess Rachel with youth's changing manifold grace.

"Taralira! Taralira!

Cooe! Come my sheep!

The bright sun kisses the little gray leaves.
The reapers are binding the golden sheaves.
The wind his caress on the sycamore leaves.
Cooe! Cooe! Come away!

"Taralira! Taralira!
Cooe! Come my sheep!
The dark stones drip in the deep, deep well.
The pitcher dips down like a sinking shell.
The water is cool as in hidden dell,
Cooe! Cooe! Come away!

"Taralira! Taralira!
Cooe! Come my sheep!
The night will fall with the setting sun.
The ravening wolf for his prey will run.
But I'll shelter you all when the day is done.
Cooe! Cooe! Come away!

* * * * *

The end of his wearisome journey for Jacob was nearing.
He saw the wide sheep-dotted meadows of Aram appearing.
As he came to the heart of the land with its verdure so cheering;
He saw the great stone on the well where the docile flocks lay,
Awaiting their noon-tide refreshment in patient array,
And the bright-turbaned herdsmen who gossiped the dull time
away.

"Whence be ye, my brethren?" asked Jacob.

"From Haran," they

said.

"And Nahor's son, Laban, him know ye?" From eager tongue
sped

The question.

"We know him," they answered and gone was the
dread
Of changes that years often bring.

"Is he well?" he inquired.
They said, "He is well."

They looked at him, strangely attired,
With curious eyes and remarks to each other, but now

"Behold, here is Rachel, his child, she will know
They added,
All you wish. She is coming to water the sheep at the well."

Then Jacob desired to be free from these herdsmen and tell
His tale to his cousin alone. To his wish he gave heed,

"The sun is still high in the heavens; the cattle should feed,
Give the sheep too their water and all to the pasturage lead!"

The herdsmen looked at him astonished these strange words to
hear.

"Thou know'st not the way of the region. All flocks must be
here

When the stone is rolled forth from the well's mouth; then no
loss we fear,

Thus none of the flock faint with thirst e'en when water is rare."

Laban's daughter came down with her flock ever carefully kept,
With chivalrous, cousinly kindness, the stranger then swept
The stone from the well's mouth and watered the dust-laden
sheep.

Then he turned to the wondering maid with emotion most deep,
And kissed her with tears that a strong man must painfully
weep

For the loss of those dearest beloved. He was heavy with days
Of solitude in the brown desert. He yearned for the gaze
Of trustful affection from those to whose care he was sent.
His words came at last with old losses in memory blent;

"I am Jacob, thy kinsman, the nephew of Laban, thy father,
The son of Rebekah; long since thou hast heard of my mother."

"I must take the good news to my sire," Rachel said. "Thou art
welcome indeed!"

Then like the swift gull that gives sea-waves or tempests small
heed,

She sped to her father, glad-hearted. The news brought surprise
To Laban and pondering somewhat, a slow pleasure rose in his
eyes.

Meanwhile Jacob who watched o'er the grass-cropping sheep,
heart afire,

Thought of her who had welcomed him, dreaming of his long
desire.

"She is fair, Oh my soul, she is fair, and her eyes spoke to mine,
Like a tone sweetly tuned to the ear, missed by some strange
design,

Life-long from the manifold tones that have rung, coarse or
fine,

Through its echoing chambers with melody's magical thrall,
But heard once, more sweet and familiar than any or all.

What free native beauty adorns her! What strength of the
brow!

Perhaps with some willful assumption combined, I allow;
But joined with a manner so winning, a speech so direct,
I am filled by her innocent charm with delight and respect."

Laban ran to make welcome the son of his sister with joy,
And gave him a greeting that gray years could never destroy.
He kissed and embraced him and with cordial love led him home,
While Jacob related the cause of his coming alone,
His brother's hot hate from the deeds without due wisdom done.

"My bone and my flesh art thou, Jacob," the elder man said;
"Thy coming, the news of my sister, both happiness shed
On our home. Thou art welcome! Remain!"

Thus a month

swiftly sped.

All the days were too fleeting for Jacob, so full was his heart
Of joy in this untried existence where love's nameless art
On his life's hidden forces with ravishing witchery wrought,
For silently, sweetly, persistently circled his thought
About the bright shepherdess who his first welcome had brought.

Much fairer was Rachel than Leah; not tender-eyed she.
She sang the gay watering-song with its wild melody.
She walked with a footstep so light that the grass scarcely bent
'Neath her feet and a poise in which every bright beauty was
blent.

Akin was her nature; no other like Rachel could see
So soon all his likings unmentioned; a comrade was she.

The swift month had fled. Laban offered to pay for his toil.
He said, "Should'st thou serve me for naught, should I freely
despoil
Thee for being my kinsman? Come, what shall thy wages be,
tell me?"

Then Jacob besought him for Rachel: "Hear, wilt thou not give
me

Thy younger maid for faithful service? I love her so dearly,
My uncle, if thou give me Rachel to wife, dost thou hear me,
I'll serve for her seven years, patiently, willingly, gladly."

His heart throbbed, his cheek burned; he stood between bright
hope and fear.

Laban saw that the offer was lavish, nor waited to hear

A wordy petition; the lover was faithful and strong.

The reward for his service would wait upon other plans long.

He craftily answered,

"Why should I send her to another,
And lose her? To wed her to thee would be better, my brother.
Then dwell here with me, give thy service and marry my maid
When the seven years' toil are complete. Be it as I have said."

* * * * *

"Come, climb to the hills!" Jacob said at the still close of day,
With the sheep safely folded and ruminant kine in array;
And Rachel, by mother-care, guarded from night's sudden chill
Went forth in that other's care, sweeter and tenderer still.

"The end of my service draws near," Jacob said as he pressed
The hand laid in his and the cheek of its owner caressed.

"Ne'er should I have dreamed that the wingéd years thus could
speed on

Thou are the magician; thine eye bade them haste; they are
gone!

"Here, rest on this grass-plot; the slope's steady length wearies
thee.

Sit thou by my side, while the stars and the moon silently
Go on their long journeys, illuming our night graciously.
This evening has been the bright goal which my heart long has
sought.

'Tis seven years since I thy hand from thy father besought.
I love our first meeting; thy sheep to the well, thou didst bring;
Surprised at my presence, bestowing thy sweet welcoming,
Thou didst hear my brief claim, then didst hasten thy father to
bring.

"The day that I spoke to thee first of my love, I could see
The blush softly creep o'er thy cheek and thine eyes' brill-
liancy,

Both dear to me telling thy love as they did, silently.
I sought for thy father's approval and found he would hear
My strong plea of generous service with listening ear,
So I offered the seasons of servitude; now they are gone,
And thou art reward enough, Rachel, for all I have done."

"The price was the price of a man who has ever loved gain;
His daughters with all that he owns must bear greed's ugly
stain."

"Nay, speak not thereof. It was naught with thee near soon and
late,

Like days were the years; like gay argosies, filled with rich
freight."

Said Jacob, for love had become Life's best treasure to him,
As it shone in the eyes of this maid, like a beautiful dream.

"The first year was gay with our pleasure; the land's many
sports

We shared in the hours of leisure in happy resorts.
The next year brought sorrow among us from sickness wide-
spread.
Thy ministry gentle relieved many; many are dead.
I too shared the nursing when possible, happy to be
Opposing dark-visaged Despair in this struggle with thee."

"Away in the night Death conveyed them while I knelt to pray,
And left us in grief to the comfort of unheeding day."
Said Rachel, subdued by the old grief for those who were gone,
Whose dear friends yet mourned for a comradeship still sweeter
grown,
As in bright scenes of long recollection relieved from all stain
By Love's kind forgetfulness and Fancy's merciful reign.

"The third year brought pain to us both from the knowledge it
bore
That Leah had poured all the wealth of her timid love's store
At my feet, though she knew that I love and can love only thee.
In thee there is heart's-ease and comfort and joy, Love, in thee."

"Of that do not speak," Rachel said, as a faint jealousy
Broke through the hour's peace with the thrust of unkind mem-
ory.

"All is past of my seven years' labor," said Jacob, "our waiting-
time past,
A full, golden sheaf of rich days in Times' garner 'twill last.
The bridal day soon will blush red with the joy it will bring
And thy heart as my heart with unuttered melody ring.
The moon's level rays strike the brow of yon, far, eastern hill
As oft in the past when the nightingale's carol was still.

Thus the moons of the future will shine as Life leads us along,
Ever happy as now, for Jehovah will guard us from wrong."

"My heart blesses God for the bright day He brought thee to us,"
Said Rachel, "Though troubled thy way, thou didst bring cheer to
us.

Our life's somber colors were warmed and renewed by thy touch,
And each was transformed and made better, I know not how
much.

Each brought forth half shyly, some hidden possession, some
grace,

Of mind or of body, some immigrant charm of the face."

"And I, till I looked upon thee, I had ne'er dreamed or thought
That Life held her arms full of treasures so graciously brought
In blessing to men.

But most strangely, since thou, hast arrived
All nature displays hidden graces that must have derived
Some fine art from thee; since thy coming, new charms she dis-
tils;

The sunsets speak to me, the moon-light, the slopes of the hills,
My mother's long tenderness now with a warmer love thrills.
Like a goddess, blithe Hope walks resplendent before me each
day

And calls to a life, full of vigorous action away."

"My service is over," said Jacob, "we face a new life,
With God as our helper and unerring guide through its strife.
Not called to the indolent lot of the desert I feel;
But fields beckon to me, o'er which the soft summer winds steal
In billowing waves, till the grain, like the sea, swells and falls,
While herds feed in meadows, the lamb to the mother-sheep calls.

Dost join in this choice of the care of the herd and the field?"

"Aye, gladly," said Rachel, "I'll willingly work by thy side. Thy choice I had chosen, in thy Lord God's aid I confide."

"The evening speeds on while the future we happily plan.
We must leave this still slope of the hills which the night breezes
fan

And return to the common-place duty and task of the morn
Enriched by the promise which kindly-faced evening has borne."
Said Jacob. They rose and enveloped in moon-light passed down
The path often trod, in a silence where jewels were strown.

* * * * *

"Jacob asks for his bride," Laban said unto Leah, the day
That Rachel was sought by her lover in wedlock. "To say
That he has not earned the dear right to her, would be to play
The part of a rascal. I do not deny him the right,
Nor seeks to evade his demand, nor his purpose to fight.
I shall hasten the nuptials; the men's merry feast I prepare,
But Rachel, long-sought, will not yet in the nuptial joys share."

"Thy meaning is hidden," said Leah, who thought to disguise
Her heart's sudden pain in the moment's unlooked-for surprise.

"Thy girlhood's best years thou has long ago passed," Laban
said,

"No amorous suitor would toil seven years thee to wed.
Uncomely, unsought, small the good thou dost add to our store;
Thou lackest the charms which all lovers of women adore.
I still see one way to redeem thee from womanhood's loss.

'Tis to capture a husband to wed thee and take up my cross. "

"By what means?" Leah whispered in anguish, but hearkening still.

"I'll wed thee to Jacob!" said Laban, "leave Rachel the ill Of losing her lover, or him the fair chance once again Through seven years' service repeated his first choice to gain."

"He loves her," sighed Leah. "'Tis Rachel he loves and not I, Her presence he seeks, her soft words are his heart's dearest joy. On her his affection is poured in unmeasured supply."

"Speak not of such trifles!" said Laban in wrath-laden tones.

"Thy pale hollow cheek, or thine eye red with weeping condones What wrong may be in it; thy passion for Jacob is plain. The good thou desirest, thy father has power to attain."

Low sank Leah's head. She remembered the month she was ill, The kindness of Jacob, his unstinted deeds of good-will, For her in her pain, an unlovely, unsought, lonely girl, Whose love paid the price with love's dizzy, impetuous whirl.

Her sad meditation was broken by Laban's rough tones; "Think not other marriage to gain if thy folly disowns My plan. Thou wilt have little here, for my sons will need all My fortune. Submit then before the chance pass once for all."

"Perform all thy will," thus the tempest-torn maiden replied, And fled to her mother for comfort and council.

To chide

Her crafty and masterful husband were useless, however Her mother-love and right's low pleading besought her to sever

The fetters of fate that withheld from her beautiful daughter
The husband who in true devotion had faithfully sought her.

The nuptial feast summoned all neighbors and friends to attend,
Companionship's cheer to the joy of the marriage to lend.
The bride-groom came with his companions to join in the feast,
And every heart shared in its pleasures from dull care released,
But Laban's. His laugh was as noisy as any, but hollow.
His eyes never smiled and there lay on his cheek the dark
shadow

Of care. For he feared the fierce anger of Jacob when all
His treacherous plot was discovered. He longed for night's fall
That darkness might lend to the bride's homely figure its grace
And slip its black veil o'er the tremulous lines of her face.
All succeeded. The bride-groom was drunken with long-hoped-
for joy,

Nor dreamed that his uncle would any base methods employ.
His bride veiled her secret in silence, and not till the morn
Did he see his harsh fate, on the clear rays of dawn coldly
borne.

His eyes stared in horror; his heart sank like lead in his breast,
He fled from the couch in his heart's bitter grief. Wild unrest
Drove him forth to the fields there to grapple his trouble alone
And to face as he must face the fate which the day-break had
shown.

"Woe is me! Woe is me!" was his pitiful, heart-broken cry.
"All I won in the days of my youth let me lose! Let me die!"

"It was day when I came from the tent.

Where's the day?

It is dark now as evening far-spent.

Oh where shall I stay?

My heart cease thy throbbing; forbear!

Oh God, canst Thou hear?

Let me pray!

Help me, Almighty!

The grip of despair is upon me.

Wild furies are raging about me!

I was wed yesterday,

I was to have wed; who shall say

It is done?

I was to have wed, but the maid

That I loved, that I toiled for, O I am afraid

I have lost my sweet maid!

Help me, Almighty!

Oh God, teach me what I must say!

Thou seest my heart, aching, bleeding,

Old ties rudely broken. I pray

Thou wilt not Thy mercy delay.

Oh love for whom the years were spent,

With joy in all their promise meant!

Oh anguish of my heavy soul

And grief that passes my control!

Dear God of justice can it be

She is forever lost to me?

That I must live, year after year

Deprived of her sweet presence' cheer?

I cannot, cannot live beneath

This weight. It kills me! Father breathe

Some hope into my fainting soul

Losing the wish to live at all!"

He sank overborne with the burden of anguish and pain,
His head fallen low on his knees, without heed to the rain

That dulled the fresh promise of morn with its unceasing fall,
While gray darkly covered the sky's azure hue with its pall.

A step sounded softly beside him. He lifted his head
And gazed in unspeakable woe upon Rachel, who said,
In words broken by sobbing,

“They seized me and bound me,

last night,

Unable I was with their fierce strength and cunning to fight;
Then I knew by their harshness that Leah was destined for thee,
That I was thus widowed and left to my wild misery.”
She sank at his side, overcome by the force of her woe,
And touched with her garment his cheek, wet with tears’ over-
flow.

“Come not near me, Oh my Rachel!

God! What is it that I speak?

I am wed! Some strange upheaval

Ruins all the plans I make.

I am wed. I may not let thee

Find in me thy comfort, more,

Though my heart will break without thee,

Thou my very being’s core.

Is no way of hope before us?

Surely God will justice mete.

He will not in need forsake us,

Will not leave us desolate.”

CHORUS OF ANGELS.

"Have faith in God, 'mid days of loss and pain.
Have faith in God in gloom and falling rain.
Have faith in God, His promise is secure,
His love and favor will endure.

He hears His children's faintest, faltering call.
He will avenge them. He is over all.
His wide-spread wings protect them from the storm,
His mercy shelters them from harm.

No cunning foe can turn their good to ill,
Nor with despair their troubled bosoms fill,
For God is great and He will keep His own
From evil snares by ways unknown."

VII.

"What is this thou hast done unto me?

"What is this, what is this thou hast done for the service I gave?"

Said Jacob to Laban: "What right for thy baseness didst have?"
He trembled with wrath and with loss's unspeakable blow,
Not daring to utter the feeling within him aglow,
But holding in check his fierce tempest of anger and woe.

With smooth-speaking craft and with manner most fair, Laban
said,

"The usage amongst us allows not the younger to wed,
Nor the honor of wifehood to bear, while the elder, a maid
Still waits for some dallying suitor, reluctant, afraid.

"There is time yet to gain thy beloved if thus it must be,
By giving thy long week of service again, faithfully.
Fulfill Leah's week, then wed Rachel, if this pleases thee."

"My grand-father wedded one bride," Jacob mused, "and when
Hagar,

Her maid, bore him Ishmael, Sarah's untamed, jealous anger
Drove forth the poor mother and child to the wilderness bare,
In hunger and want, without Abraham's fatherly care.
My father, the one child of Sarah, her death could not bear
Till the good Eliezer's long quest gave him joy in his wife,
Thy sister Rebekah. In her he found comfort and life
Compensating his loss. She alone shared his heart and his home.
It is true Esau heedlessly weds Heth's strange daughters, but

gloom

And strife are too often their part; not the sweet peace of home.

“Yet I still may wed Rachel. May wed her? Then wed her I must!

For her, my beloved, as for me, nothing less would be just.

Oh man, harsh and cunning, untrue to the trust that was thine!

No blessing can come from thy treachery, base and malign.

Thy eldest is wed, it is true, by thy merciless plot,

But what is a marriage to her wherein love follows not?

My love is another's. To Rachel my whole soul is wed.

The love Leah gives has by no kindred passion been fed.

From some other future her heart's tardy comfort might flow,

From this unsought union of sisters to one, what can grow

But envy and jealousy, heart-breaking anguish and pain,

The night's sleepless pillow, the day's bitter strife in their train!

Not mine is the fault! Thou didst bring on thy daughter this ill.

I gave thee good service. Thus dost thou thy contract fulfill!

What worth are harsh words in this trouble? There is but one end.

I will take to me, Rachel, my wife, at the festival's end.

I must grant thy demand for the second long service. I wait

For my bride long since promised, the nuptial-day troubled and late.”

The whirlwind of grief had passed by. Rachel saw that her sister

Must share in the home of her husband. The sense of disaster

Was balanced by joy in his love, hers to have, hers to own,

And she took his warm comradeship, leaving the elder alone.

As in the long days of betrothal the man and the maiden
Wove fancies, built castles, all richly with future good laden;
So now in the sweet days of wedlock they shared the full hours
While Leah was lonely and loveless.

The specter that cowers

By unsteady consciences often arose in the night
Before Rachel to blame her for selfishly taking all right
To the love of her husband. The days of their girlhood rebuked
her
So happily spent in the sisterly joys that now mocked her.
But ever she bade the pale specter begone and declared
The love that was hers should with no false usurper be shared.

VIII.

"The Lord saw that Leah was hated."

"The long years still pass with their merciless torment and pain,
The scourge of my soul, swept with love ne'er requited again."
Leah thought as she labored alone 'neath the terebinth tree,
Preparing the garments required in the toil yet to be.
"The first hate of Rachel fell fiercely upon my sad heart.
The coldness of Jacob accused me of taking the part
Of guile with my father. I hoped that forgiveness might be
Even yet for the wrong that was mine; but their harsh cruelty
Held me far from their hearts and I sought consolation in vain,
Till God looked in pity upon me and eased my long pain
With a son.

His dear innocent hands touched invisible wounds
With love's gentle healing. Sweet hope climbed the magical
rounds
Of the ladder of faith.

'He will love me!' I said; I was wrong
For the days passed as bare of his love as before and my song
Of joy sank to silence. Then Simeon came to declare
God had heeded my wrong and bestowed on my sorrow His care.
Then Levi was added.

'Now Jacob will be joined to me,'
I said, and with Judah my praise rose to God cheerfully.

Thank God for my sons, the one solace for all that I miss,
For calm wedded love and my husband's affectionate kiss,
Warm sympathy soothing the long-stretching cares of the day,
The comfort of blessing the one I love best on my way.
I lack these, must lack them as in the long years that are gone,

So too in the future, the long empty years that shall come.
My sons make the trial a little less heavy to bear,
But they as they grow must be witnesses of my despair,
Imbibing the spirit of hatred and strife that maintains
Its power in our life and our household serenity stains.

"No more Rachel loves me as in the glad days of our youth,
With proud but affectionate gaiety, charming, in sooth,
Which made her the pride of my heart though a thorn in my
side;

For to her I must yield and for her we must all first provide;
For her glowed my mother's best love, swelled the pride of my
sire;

She was favored of all who frequented our evening hearth-fire.
The deep love of Jacob was always hers, never for me,
The wife that my sire forced upon him in cold treachery,
And I who permitted it, suffer the deed's penalty.

I loved him, this man who embodied all good I had dreamed
In youth's tintless visions. My highest ideal he seemed.
Nay still is, for he sinks not below the high standard I set
Except that he loved me not, seems not to love, even yet.
He leaves me, neglects me, forgets me, his wife these long years,
Though his sons are my offspring, his home their bright baby-
hood cheers.

"Still childless is Rachel. No babe of hers runs through the
tent,

No laughter of her happy children with light breeze is blent.
How oft in her corner she sits apart, solemn and still,
Still longing for those who her impotent arms never fill;
Then turns in unreasoning hatred and wrath against me

Whose children their father caresses; who play round his knee.

"God has heard my complaint. He has pitied my outcast estate.
The children He gives me bind up the raw wounds cut by hate;
Their kisses draw out pain's deep poison with innocent art,
And little arms twined round my neck lessen sadness of heart.
To-day, though, the torrent of grief pours its flood as of yore.
Fresh, merciless wounds, coldly given, have cut to the core
My long-troubled heart and I plead for God's pity once more.
Unkindness and hate have again swept so fiercely o'er me,
Of life I am weary if God shall be deaf to my plea.

"I call on Thee, Oh living God!
To hear me, from Thy high abode!
Soothe Thou my spirit and provide
Some lasting joy and peace beside.
Oh let me share the love I need,
Without which I am poor indeed.
Give me some token of Thy power,
Some help in this forsaken hour.
Again to all the hateful strife
Of this unlovely cruel life
I must return; send some supply
Of good! Let me not hopeless die!
Still let my future be Thy care!
Still let me in Thy mercy share!
Thou Gracious One who hast bestowed
The sons that make me rich, my God."

IX.

"Rachel envied her sister."

When Reuben was born Rachel looked at the stranger askance,
An interest mingled with impulses strange in her glance.
The child won his way to her heart. Who can hold back a child
From his innocent empire of love with its tyranny mild?
Then Simeon followed and Levi and Judah; the more
The flock of her sister increased, Rachel sorrowed the more,
For still were her longing arms childless, still lacked the caress
A helpless head resting upon them leaves, gently to bless.
The night saw her tear-watered pillow, the day discontent,
And increasing envy of Leah, with bitterness blent.
The beautiful Rachel desponded and lost her rare grace,
Her once winsome fairness, her piquant attraction of face.
The lines left by grief long-indulged-in, by envy and hate
Had darkened her visage and marred it; nor did they abate
As the lonely years passed.

Jacob saw her the prey of despair,
Rebellion and mournful self-pity were mixed with her prayer,
That seemed not to reach the blue heavens, as if God's good
care
Had left her.

"This lot is too bitter!" she wailed as she saw
Leah's joy in the strong grace of Judah, the last heavy straw
On her burden of envy and longing.

"God hears not my cry,
My husband, the years pass; give children to me, or I die!"

The long-patient husband whose love passed forgivingly by
Her sadness, was kindled to anger, so causeless the cry.

He said,

“Am I God to keep back or to give at my will?
Have reason and patience; endure thy hard lot and be still!”

“Let Bilhah, my maid, give me children,” persisting, she said.
Then Dan was born.

“God has attended my prayer,” Rachel
said,
And Naphtali followed.

“I wrestled and strove with my sister

And I have prevailed.”

No sweet tokens of peace had released her
From quarrels unjust as unequal. In silence her heart
Spoke with her and led her to see the unmerciful part
Of her past life. She said,

“I am sorry I have not been kinder
The good long-withheld must fore’er be a gloomy reminder
That I might be more blessed if I would not my duty evade.
I know not. At times I repent of the wounds I have made,
And ask God to pardon me, weary of sin and afraid,
And then the old wrong and her boys full of vigor inflame
My hate into fury. I feel that my loss is her blame.”
Thus Rachel oft brooded.

Still Leah unceasingly plead
That she might find favor with Jacob. Ill-wed, so ill-wed!
The sons of the household were ten, with a daughter to share
The sports of her brothers, her mother’s increasing home-care,
When God vouchsafed favor to Rachel, and heeded her cry,
Withdrew her reproach and bestowed on her Joseph, her boy.

"God has given us a son!
Happy, happy, happy day!
Now our life shall brightly run
All its long and changing way.

Thine and mine and thine once more!
See! He has thy brow and eyes!"
"And thy mouth, my loved one, more
More that time will not disguise."

"Now he sleeps; angelic smiles
Play about his baby cheeks;
Unheard message sweet beguiles,
Unseen guest his presence seeks."

"When he walks from me to thee,
When in youth he shares our joy,
In man's strength our staff shall be,
How we'll bless God for our boy!"

X.

"I have learned by experience that God hath blessed me for thy sake."

Said Jacob, ,
"The days of my labor are ended; thou knowest my care
And servitude faithful. My wives and my children prepare
To part with, in my care to leave them, for hence I would go.
Give me those I have toiled for; that my right is just, thou dost
know."

"Nay, tarry, I pray thee!" said Laban, "if I have found grace
With thee, since it is for thy sake, God has honored my race
With blessing and increase. Still tarry, my son! Do not go!
The wage thou requirest inform me. That will I bestow."

Then Jacob made answer, "Thy cattle with me thrive and grow.
Thou knowest my service; but few didst thou have when I came;
A multitude now, ever growing, crop grass on the plain.
I came and God blessed thee; thou seekest to hold me here still.
But when shall I toil for my own home and guard it from ill?"

Then Laban said,

"What shall I give thee?" and Jacob replied,
"Not anything shalt thou spend on me; if thou shouldst decide
To give what I ask for, then I will yet care for thy flock;
To-day will pass through them, where scattered o'er meadow or
rock,
And take thence the speckled and spotted, the brown of the
sheep,
The goats also, speckled and spotted; all these thou shalt keep.

Hereafter my wage shall be those which these markings shall
bear,

The spotted of goats and the brown of the sheep be my share."

"According to all of thy word be it done," Laban said.

Delight with the past and the new hope of gain filled his head.

He took the goats, ring-streaked and spotted, the brown-colored
sheep,

And ordered his sons as their shepherds the watch-care to keep.

Betwixt these and Jacob a journey of three days he set,

And the flocks left behind to their long-trained defender he let.

The years of o'er-reaching of Laban gave more need of gain,

Of unequaled wisdom and skill in the years to remain.

Jacob sought the increase of his herds with a calm earnest will,

Of the ring-streaked and speckled and brown that ne'er yielded,
until

His art brought the stronger and healthier stock to his herds.

He prospered through heeding God's law, which unchanging, af-
fords

All good without fail, who obey it. His wealth was increased;

The gain of his asses, his camels, his flocks never ceased.

Still God was his helper; his household and children were
blessed,

His flocks grew exceedingly; good was in all he possessed.

XI.

“Return unto the land of thy fathers and to thy kindred; and I
will be with thee.”

Said Laban's sons, “Jacob has taken all that was our sire's,
This glory of his grew from what was our father's.”

The fires

Of jealousy, hate and revenge are enkindled with ease.
They flamed in the cold heart of Laban and blazed, nor did cease,
While his sons fanned the merciless fire that must e'er destroy
peace.

Of all the great gain Jacob brought him, his service ill-paid,
He thought not, but dwelt evermore on the fortune he made.
As always the thought of his heart traced its legible lines
On his face with the unkindly feelings, the hostile designs
To the man who had wedded his daughters.

The Lord watching

ever
O'er all who accept his wise guidance and tarrying never,
Appeared at his need and addressed him:

“Return to the land
Of Isaac, thy father; I still shall be at thy right hand.”

The afternoon, warm with spring sunshine was passing away,
As Jacob looked down o'er the hills on his goodly array
Of cattle that fed in the meadows and fat flocks of sheep,
Their pasturage leaving to seek the safe night-fold and sleep.
His camels were grazing near by while the tents of his home
Amid the tall trees that embowered them peacefully shone.

"Come lad, I must send thee for Rachel and Leah," he said;
The boy, gladly leaving his task, to the tents swiftly sped.

Day's splendor decadent o'er meadow and field stretched away,
While Jacob his life, past and possible paused to survey.
His sons grew in beauty and strength, Rachel's dearest of all,
Home joys ne'er were sweeter, ties stronger, ne'er deeper love's
thrall.

But distrust's poisoned arrow had fallen in this place of peace,
And the ties that had bound him must loosen, the old life must
cease.

Afar o'er the fields were approaching the wives he had wed.
Full twenty long years had gone by since to Aram he fled,
The wrath of his brother escaping.

'Twas then that he met

The earnest-faced women with whom joy and sorrow were yet
All inwound. Ah! his wives were far other those sweet summer
days

When life was unfolding its promise and love's happy lays
Mingled hope with their musical strains. Then the hours were
as bright

As if all the colors combined in their halcyon light,
Were sparkling and gleaming with radiant hope and delight.
The years had lain heavy upon them. The spirit of her
Whose love was the sun of his manhood, had raged o'er and o'er
Against Fate's unyielding rock barriers, lessened the force
Of winsomeness and happy energy still finding course
Of constant refreshing amid the sere lives of their kin,
The fount's laughing fullness restrained by the dead leaves of
sin.

A patience that blended with deep-seated sadness abode
On Leah's pale face. On her shoulders there rested the load
Of motherhood's duties and cares while Love's hand had not knit
All her household in one with all purposes subject to it.

Strange words he must speak, of the changes to alter their life;
Of the loss they must suffer; the land of their infancy rife
With memories green to be left in the far dreamy past,
While they journey with him to his home-land and kindred at
last.

"My wives!" Faltered words, full of feeling: "Your father is
changed!

His face is no longer toward me. His sons are all ranged
In conflict against me. They envy me all God has done,
In the increase He gave, which through long years of labor has
come.

Ye know I have toiled for your father with good will and
strength;

But he has deceived me and altered my wage, though the length
Of my service demanded his kindness—ten times, o'er and o'er.

"But God will not let his devices do harm to me more.
His blessing has fallen upon me. The ring-straked He gave,
The speckled as well when by them Laban struggled to save
The growing flocks from me. Thus God has withdrawn from your
father

His herds and bestowed them on me. His just providence ever
Sustains me in days of affliction, abandons me never.

His angel appeared in my dreams saying, "Jacob!"

"'Tis I!"

I answered. He told me God's purpose with grave majesty.

He promised my cattle the increase. He did not pass by
Your father's unkindness. He said,

'In thy servitude long
I have seen Laban's cunning toward thee and stratagems wrong.
I am the Lord God who at Bethel appeared where thy vow
Thou didst make while anointing thy pillar to Me. My will now
Is that thou arise and go forth from this land where a stranger
Thou art, and return to thy kindred, protected from danger.'

Then Rachel and Leah made answer, "Can there ever be
Here an heirship for us while our father is hostile to thee,
Has he not looked on us as strangers, as slaves he might sell,
Devouring our money and stinting thy wages as well?
The riches which God has withdrawn from him, to us belong
And our children; what He has commanded to do that we long
To aid in performing and thus recompense thy great wrong."

The season of shearing found Laban afield with his sheep;
His sons shared the task. O'er the wide pleasant valley lay
sleep.

Then Jacob arose. On his camels he set sons and wives,
And with cattle and goods he went forth breaking long heavy
gyves.

He sought the dear land of his fathers, whose soft vapors blew
In fancy once more o'er his brow from the fields wet with dew.
The sun shone upon those green meadows again as before,
And the well of Lahai-roi's clear waters were cool as of yore.

The idols of Laban were stolen by Rachel who yet
At the altars of childhood bowed sometimes with artless regret.
Unawares unto Laban the Syrian, Jacob went forth
Betraying to no man his purpose by words, lest the worth

Of his secret departure he lost, through the hearing of all
By the keen ear of Laban whose sons would obey his first call.

With his wives and his children, in haste through the night-time
he fled

With all of his gathered possession toward Mount Gilead.
Behind lay the valley of Aram in moon-light's soft beam,
That shone upon green field and meadow and light-rippling
stream.

They came to the mighty Euphrates where low swept its tide
At the ford, lying shallow amid the swift torrents, that guide
The light willow crafts to the rapids.

In safety they passed
Its tortuous torrent and found on the farther shore, rest.
The Syrian plains lay before them in morn's growing light
Rose-pink with the dawn and as still as the untrodden night
Till the lowing of cattle and bleating of goats and of sheep
Awoke distant echoes and drove forth the rear-guards of sleep.

As the days passed they came into desolate wastes of the plains,
That glistened with salt or were gray with volcanic remains.
The chamomile shone like the snow, in its spring-time array
In low-lying valleys and scant clumps of brush broke the way.

By long stages they crossed the wild desert, o'er valley and hill,
Where the tempests Etesian raged with their portent of ill,
Where the slinking hyena had fled from his rotting prey,
And the cobra had twisted his venomous coil by the way,
Or where the rough Ishmaelite sought the fleeting gazelle.
Jehovah was with them and through the long way all was well.

With fury and sorrow the uncle of Jacob had heard
The news of his stealthy departure without farewell word.

"My goods he has taken, my children!" the angry man cried,
"He shall not escape from my service so lightly denied,
But back to the land of my sires in humility come,
Unresisting obey all my orders and make here his home!"

He marshalled his brethren and hot-headed sons in pursuit,
And stirred their resentment to flames by his words.

The salute

Of farewell as they turned their swift steeds to the wastes was
returned

By their wives urging on in their conflict with Jacob. They
yearned

For the wealth he had taken. Their reasonless anger was hot
At the stranger who took from their midst the large gains he
had got.

The camels strode fleetly along in the warlike advance,
And sternly the weapons of warfare gleamed, sword and lance.
Their camels, like fossils cast up from a long-ago time,
Wore the dusty brown look of their past sleeping age, all in time
With a land that was aged as its denisons for of no clime,
Is the desert, nor era; the death that has reigned in its past,
Has no changing treasure, or earth-covered ruin to cast
At men's feet.

At its borders death stands with a message of fear,
A caution to foresight the provident living must hear.

The camel, adust, with his age-wrinkled brow scents the blast
With its pitiless fury. His tireless cushioned feet cast

No loud-ringing echo behind them. His eye has no word
And his tongue none. He steadily hastens the silence toward,
As the robin to spring-time, the fish to its element, bear
To his den, or the eagle to untrodden cliffs in the free realms of
air.

The chief had no hindrances holding him back in the chase
He had studied his course; his fierce wrath was relieved by the
race.

A week took them over the desert-plains, painfully crossed
By the sire with the mothers, the children and herds at such cost.

* * * * *

The night air lay chill on the mountain, the tents were all spread.
The women and children were sleeping; not sleeping their Head.
He watched a far camp-fire soon followed by other fires' glow,
And knew that his uncle but waited the morning to show
His cruel heart's hatred. Wild forces were with him, he knew
Prepared to break forth on his unsheltered household and do
Him such harm, only God in his trouble could carry him through.

Laban slept in his tent on the mountain adjoining, worn out
With the speed of his seven days' journey. His dreams hung
about

The next morning's encounter; amid the fierce words of reproof
And rejoinder, the stern clash of lances, the threats loud and rough
That broke through his slumber, there fell a hush heavy with
fear,

For a strange Form took shape in the gloom, drawing slowly
more near

And he knew that Jehovah, the God of his foeman, was there.

Whatever of evil his heart had designed 'gainst his kin,

Disappeared when the Presence majestic came silently in.
His rude opposition all vanished before the great Power
That spoke in such accents as made his heart tremble and cower,

“Speak thou unto Jacob, nor evil nor good from this hour!”

The Vision departed and with it all courage was gone
For cruel oppression, all envy of his mighty son.

At morn in the door of his tent with his household beside him
Stood Jacob, all forces prepared for whate’er might betide him.
Across the low valley his uncle’s wild company came
With gay show of color and dress, in defence of the name
Of their chieftain, the patriarch Laban who did not appear
So o’erflowing with anger as Jacob had reason to fear,
While they halted their leader approached the offender who
stood
As silently strong as a great sycamore in the wood.

Then Laban said, “What hast thou done, stealing forth unawares
To me, with my daughters, like captives held fast in thy snares.
Why didst thou flee from me by stealth, slipping out in the night?
I had not the chance to bestow e’en the simple delight
Of gay mirth and song, or of tabret and harp to express
My pleasure in all thy life’s good and my children to bless.
Thou didst not permit me to kiss my own daughters and sons
Farewell. In so doing, I see thou hast foolishly done.
I have in my power to bring harm to thy children and thee.
All through the long journey revenge drove me on savagely.
Yester-night, though, there came to my bedside, Jehovah thy God,
A fearful and solemn appearance that my temper awed.
He said,

'Be thou ware; speak to Jacob, nor evil ,nor good!'
I could not be heedless of His great command if I would.

Yet, though thou hadst need to be gone from thy longing desire,
Heart-deep for the long-foregone household and love of thy sire,
Yet why hast thou stolen my gods?"

"Because I was afraid,
I went thus by stealth lest restraint bar my going; with dread
For I knew that thy daughters were so dear to thee," Jacob said,
"I feared, peradventure by force thou wouldst take them from
me;

The risk was so great; for I knew that the farewells would be
Full of sorrow and loss that would strain thy good purpose
toward me.

But he who has taken thy gods, let his life be the price.
My goods let our brethren examine, their judgment suffice."
For Jacob, not knowing that Rachel had stolen the gods
And blameless in conscience was willing to risk such large odds.

Through Jacob's tent Laban went searching, through Leah's the
maids',

But found not the idols he sought, then at last, did invade
The tent Rachel used. She had hidden the idols away
In the traps of the camel and sat thereon. When Laban's way
Had led him in search unavailing through all things, he came
To her seat. She besought him,

"My lord, let it not bring me
blame
That I cannot arise for the pain that is on me."

He sought
But found not. His gods were the prey of his daughter's false
plot.

Then Jacob was angry and chode with the man who had gone
Through his goods. He said,

“What is my trespass, say, what

have I done

That thou hast so hotly pursued me? In search through my stuff
What of thine hast thou found therein? Set it betwixt us—
enough

That thy brethren and mine judge between us both; they shall
discern

What is right, for if aught there is thine all its worth I would
spurn!

“For twenty hard years I have served thee; thy goats and thy
ewes

Have not cast their young ones; to eat thy rams, ne’er was my
due.

What wild beasts have torn in the fields I have ne’er brought to
thee.

’Twas my loss; without shame thou didst ever require it of me,
Whether stolen by day or by night, though defended in vain.

“Thus I was; in the day-time the drought has consumed me with
pain

And at night cold and frost have laid hold on and chilled me
again.

The care was all mine, till sleep passed from my eyelids away,
The management mine, and the burden and toil of each day.

These twenty years has it been thus which to thy house I gave,
Fourteen for thy daughters and six for they cattle a slave.

In these twenty years thou hast altered my wages ten times.

All of justice and mercy are lost in thy selfish designs.

"Had God not been with me, the Fear of my father, the God Of Abraham, faithful and mighty, with His chastening rod, Thou hadst let me go forth empty-handed, forsaken, alone, But God looked on my tribulation and toil from His throne, And yester-night sternly rebuked thee for my unjust ill."

Then Laban made answer, "These daughters are my daughters still,

These children my children, these cattle my cattle, yea, all That thou seest is mine.

I still love them; no harm must befall Their innocent heads; therefore come and a covenant make, A witness that we will forever old quarrels forsake."

Then Jacob laid hold of a stone which he set up in trust, As a pillar of witness to God who is faithful and just. He said to his brethren, "Bring stones!" and they made there an heap

And feasted upon it, by this pledge guest-friendship to keep. To Laban as Jegar-sahadutha, the witness, it stood, To Jacob, Galeed, also Mizpah to both, for it should Call God to keep watch 'twixt the two in their absence, remind Each of them of the pledge which should both to true loyalty bind.

Said Laban,

"If thou harm my daughters or take to thee wives Still other than these, thy Lord God our witness still lives." And added,

"Behold thou this heap and this pillar which 'twixt us are cast!

Let these be the witness that never, so long as life last Will I pass this limit to thee or shalt thou pass to me

For evil; the God of great Abraham, Nahor as well
And their father's God be the judge."

Jacob sware he would dwell
On his side, by the Fear of his father. He summoned his
brethren

To eat bread as a token of faith and they ate with their brethren,
The children of Laban and tarried till night on the mount
In peace which had come from unseen, inexhaustible Fount.

With the morn Laban rose, kissed his sons and his daughters
farewell,

And the aged man's blessing on those who had gone from him
fell

With grace. He went forth to the eastward across the bare
plain,

Returning to seek his old life and his own place again.

XII.

"And Jacob went on his way and the angels of God met him."

The past with its love and its trouble, its loss and its gain
Was gone into memory's vague but beloved domain.
The future lay pathless, but open before Jacob's gaze,
With its shadows of danger, yet promising hope's happy days.

He went on his way as did Laban. He met with surprise
For God's messenger-angels, good helpers in heavenly guise
Came to meet him and sing hopeful songs from their beautiful
land

To encourage his heart in the new need and trouble at hand.
Jacob called the blest region Mahanaim—it was God's host
That came to the stranger, afar from his kindred and lost
In uncertainty, singing their songs of God's mercy and grace
Which bring their sure aid to His servants in every place.

Promise of blessing the angels bring
Hovering lightly on shadowy wing,
Promise of comfort, of grace and strength
Meet for the days in their busy length.

Breath of the rare fields of heaven is shed
On the soft breeze whence the gloom has fled.
Doubt and despair have sped swiftly away;
Angels bring in God's unshadowed day.

All will be well where the angels bring
Their shelter with gracious encompassing.
God will not leave him to grope in wrong

Who has had ears for the angels' song.

"Fear not, Oh Jacob,
God will be with thee.
Comfort, peace and blessing
Shall thy portion be.

Fear not, Oh Jacob!
He who brought thee home
To the land of Canaan
Still will lead thee on.

Fear not, Oh Jacob!
To thy Refuge flee!
God is still beside thee
And fore'er shall be."

Jacob saw the bright scenes of his youth in the vista of memory:
There were the spring days when they brought in the dying
lambs tenderly

To their mother. Again he sod pottage when faint from the
chase

Esau came and he sold him the meal for his birthright. His face
Was flushing to crimson; there flashed o'er his mind's changing
scene

The day when obeying Rebekah he chose to demean
Himself with the theft of the blessing his father had saved
For the elder who seeing his loss in wild impotence raved.

The day of requital had come as the wanderer knew.
No peace was for him in the vale unless Esau would do
The part of a generous kinsman and let him proceed

To the hills of his home-land from all troubling hindrances
freed.

He sent heralds forward to Esau in Seir, in the field
Of Edom, commanding them saying,

“Let naught be concealed,
Ye shall carry these tidings to Esau, my lord: Jacob says,
‘I have sojourned with Laban remaining till now, and the ways
Of my God have been gracious and kind to me through all the
days.

I have men-servants, maid-servants, oxen and asses and flocks;
I pray that my message the door of thy heart may unlock,
That thou wilt vouchsafe to me brotherly kindness and grace
In thy welcome of these and my not-distant sight of thy face.’”

The long hours of waiting were over; the heralds returning,
Said,

“We told Esau all that thou badst us, and he upon learn-
ing

That thou hadst arrived, called his tribe-men together and now
He is coming to meet thee with four hundred men who all bow
The knee in obedience to him.”

The chief was afraid

And greatly distressed at the threat in their tidings conveyed.
His past evil deeds were before him. The eyes of his brother
Seemed to gaze on them with him and point to them, one and
another.

In his fear he divided the folk that were with him, the herds
And the camels and flocks, everything in two bands with the
words,

“If Esau descend on the one and destroy it, the other

May hasten away and escape the fierce hand of my brother."

Then he prayed to the Lord who had succored him always in need,

Believing in Him he would find strength and comfort indeed.

"Oh Lord God of Abraham, God of my fathers," he said,

"Who saidest, 'Return to thy country and kin without dread,
And I will deal well with thee, well with thee as I have said.'

I am not deserving of aught of the mercy and truth

Which Thou hast bestowed on Thine unworthy servant from youth.

I had but my staff when I passed o'er this Jordan and now

I am grown with the years to two bands. Oh Jehovah, I bow

At Thy merciful feet. I beseech Thee, deliver Thy chosen

Whom Thou hast directed and kept from the uncertain woes in The way. Now release me, I pray, from the hand of my brother,

From Esau's harsh hand, for I fear he will smite me; the mother

As well and the children. Thou hast not forgotten, Oh Lord,

That Thou saidst, 'I will surely do good unto thee!' 'Twas Thy word,

'And make thy seed flourish, increasing as sands of the sea

In multitude, saved by my hand for a great destiny.'"

He pondered; if impulse led on Esau's will as of old

He would yield now to kindness perchance and the unsteady hold

Of long-past dislike, looser grown through the unthinking years,
Would break in the binding of brotherly love, warm with tears.

He lodged there that night and he took of what came to his hand
A present for Esau, his wavering grace to command;

Two hundred she-goats; twenty he-goats, some of ewes and of rams,

And thirty milch camels with colts; here there were no false
shams;

Forty kine and ten bulls, a score she-asses also ten foals.

He delivered them unto his servants and bade each control
His herd, every drove by itself and he said unto them;

"Pass over before me with spaces betwixt the droves!" then
He commanded the foremost:

"When Esau, my brother draws

near

And asks thee, 'Whose art thou, where going and whose are
these here?'

Reply, 'They are thy servant Jacob's, a present, my lord,
Sent to thee by thy long-absent brother with hope of accord
Betwixt ye. Behold he is coming behind us!'"

And so

He commanded the second and all, that each leader might do
What he could to gain favor. He said,

"I will please

My brother with presents and thus his harsh temper appease,
And afterward I will go forward and look on his face.
Peradventure he may bid me welcome, with pardoning grace."

So the present went forward before him. He lodged with the
rest,

But rose in the night from a slumber by trouble oppressed,
And took his two wives with their maids and the sons they had
borne,

Eleven strong lads, and o'er Jabbok with heart that must mourn,
He sadly conveyed them with all of his herds and his goods,
All the wealth that Jehovah had given in far fields and woods.

He stood there alone by the brook with his long love of gain,
And faced empty-handed the fear of loss, sorrow and pain.

"No gods before Me shall ye have," a still voice seemed to say,
Which Jacob in this hour of anguish must learn to obey.
No heart but must give up its idol or God, soon or late,
For He who is loving and just will no shrine tolerate,
In hearts dedicated to Him on which strange fire doth burn.
Some Jabbok of loss to His worship must bring full return.

How dark was the valley! The loved and the cherished were
gone.

In his fear he could place his weak trust in Jehovah alone.

Then a strange Man came forth from the shadows that heavily lay
About him, and wrestled with him till the breaking of day;
A Phantom that knew him and seemed his defects to betray,
Now taking the form of his brother, from whom he had fled,
Now that of the uncle with whom, yester-night he had plead,
Now that of a Spirit that tested his power of soul,
That greatly inspired him with love for Life's best, highest goal,
And stirred up his faith in the Lord, in His all-wise control.
The Wrestler prevailed not in fight; then the curve of his thigh
He touched and in struggle disjoined its hollow, thereby
Seeking means to defeat him; the hollow was out of joint still,
As he wrestled and strove with the angel. His desperate will
Gave him strength until dawn scattered night with its tokens of
ill.

"Let me go!" said the Spirit, "day is breaking, dawn shines in the
east!"

"I will not! Thou shalt not go from me and leave me unblest."

"Thy name," said the Spirit, "is Jacob." The pleader replied.

"Not Jacob, but Israel, powerful ruler and guide,
Prevailer in prayer and in struggle, from lower life free,
And fitted by faith for thy part in the world's destiny."
And Jacob asked,

"Tell me, I pray thee, thy name!" and He said,

"Wherefore shouldst thou ask for My name? I will bless thee
instead."

And He blessed him there. Jacob at rest gave his name to the
place;

He called it Peniel for there he saw God, face to face,
And his life was preserved.

As the fresh day arose in the east, he passed over Peniel;
The night with its terror was gone, with its awful ordeal,
But he still kept the mark of the wrestling in which he had won,
He halted and limped on his thigh in the bright, morning sun.

XIII.

"And Jacob lifted up his eyes and looked and behold, Esau came."

Frost lay on the forehead of Esau, the hoar-frost of years.
His face bore the marks of his feastings, his pleasures, his
fears.

A wild chief of the desert was he and the mountain and vale
Gave him fortress and homestead and meadow-land, free without
fail.

He fitted the life of the desert like rider to steed.
He knew all its manifold secrets, its wealth and its need.
He hunted the fox and the plover, the wild boar, gazelle.
He let not the ground by his camp-fire be trodden too well.
He rested not, settled not, tilled not; he made him no home,
But with his wild, wandering tribe was contented to roam.

There came to his camp the strange tidings of Jacob's return,
And dear memories, anger and hatred burst forth in their turn.
There came back the day when his brother was won to the
chase

Of the deer, and his arrows fell wildly afield in the race;
And how he had taken him forth to a cave, there to hide
Like cave-men and made him a month as his camp-mate abide;
The way Jacob stood by the staid life of tilling and toil,
And would not consent to join with him the chase and its spoil.
But one day he bought for red pottage his birthright, a prize
Which he in his famishing hunger did lightly despise.
And then he was robbed of his blessing by cunning so base,
That it made his blood boil, hot with anger, deep-mantling his
face.

He gathered his hunters together, gave orders to ride,
And took his stern place at their head as their captain and guide.

"At last let me kill the deceiver!" he cried in his heat.

The calmness and hush of the highway, the stream at his feet,
The stars in their Orient splendor, the sun's gracious beam,
Soon gave his impetuous spirit a kindlier gleam.
In the night's mighty silence his heart's voice would not be
denied,

It spoke of Jehovah neglected, his mandates defied,
Of the brides who had led him to bow at idolatrous shrines,
And urged that the heir of the promise must love God's designs.
It spoke of his careless neglect of his sire, his delight
in hunting, in theft's daring carnival, war's bloody fight.
And it told him in causes his innermost reason must own,
That his wild useless life in the desert could never have won
The blessing bestowed by the father on his younger son.

"It is well he returns to his sire with a heritage earned
By a steady conformance to duties which I long have spurned.
I'll go with my greeting," said Esau, "and leave him, perchance,
None the worse for my four hundred riders with sword and
lance."

The present of Jacob sent forward with brotherly grace
Extinguished the last sparks of anger and cleared his dark face.

Long Jacob kept watch till he saw Esau come with his men,
While fear with his new faith contended and struggled again.

He parted the mothers and children in four groups and sent

The maids with their young ones as leaders while after them
went

With her numerous household, sad Leah, then Rachel, the last
With Joseph completing the train for the father harassed.
Before them he went as their head, their defender and guide,
And seven times bowing, he humbly advanced to the side
Of Esau who ran forth to meet him, embraced him and fell
On his neck as he kissed him. They both felt the wonderful
spell

Of kinship. They held each the other and wept.

Then there fell

A silence between them, till, seeking some kind words of peace,
Esau said as he saw his companions, "And pray who are these?"

Jacob said, "God has given thy servant these tokens of grace,
My children."

The handmaids came near with their children and
bowed,

Then Leah advanced with her sons and then Rachel, a crowd,
That made his eyes moist in beholding, his heart warm and
light,
For household love ever awakened his manhood's delight.

Then he said, "What is meant by this manifold drove that I met?"

And Jacob replied, "Thus I sought for thy favor; Oh let
My lord kindly take what I sent him and be gracious yet."

Esau answered, "My brother, I have a sufficient supply,
Keep those that thou hast. Thou wilt need them perchance, by
and by."

Then Jacob, "I pray thee if I have found grace in thy sight,
Receive this my gift as an offering, fitting and right.
For thy face has blessed me e'en as the Lord God's would have
done.
Thou hast pardoned the past and our long-time estrangement is
gone."

Thus urged Esau took the rich gift and the brothers at peace,
Told over the long days of absence, the hardships, the ease
Dwelling much on their households beloved and their mother's
decease.

The fear of the struggle is harder than all that is borne.
God gives each surrender or triumph, then no one should mourn
But trust in the way that He leads us, the lot He bestows,
Endowed with the grace for endurance that in trial grows.

The meeting was over and Esau, the host, thought of home,
And said,

"Let us journey, I first as thy guide, brother! Come!"

But Jacob made answer, "The children are tender, my lord,
Thou knowest each flock is delayed by the young ones, each herd.
With one day's over-driving they all would grow weary and die.
My lord, show this grace to thy servant; before us pass by,
And I will lead gently along as the children and herds
Can easily bear it, till Seir our welcome affords."

Then Esau gave heed to the wish of his brother and went,
Amid his rough cavalry whose shining lances were spent
On the unwarlike air, to his journey on home needs intent.

The wanderer Jacob went forth unto Succoth and built
Him a dwelling and booths for his cattle.

Though home songs
would lilt

Through his mind, o'er and o'er and steal tenderly into his heart,
He waited with caution and sought to act wisely his part.
At least he, who had toiled as a servant in exile, at last
Had a house where the dear household spirit its bright blessing
cast.

His herds were protected and fed on rich meadows. He felt
The ease of a man with whom God has most graciously dealt.

The field where he set up his tent when from Esau he turned,
As from Padan-Aram and Laban's long toil he returned,
He bought from the father of Shechem.

His heart freshly yearned
For an altar at which to establish God's worship and praise.
At length he upreared it with services worthy the place
And called it El-elohe—Israel, the Ancient Of Days,
That place where his long journey ended, with tenderest care
He devoted to God as his altar of worship and prayer.
At last in the land of his fathers his race was at home,
No more if his wish be God's purpose, in exile to roam.

XIV.

"And Dinah went out to see the daughters of the land."

The daughter of Leah was beautiful, comely of face,
Her girlhood was lonely without friendship's sunshiny grace,
And she sought 'mongst the maidens about her a friend's happy
place.

In her search she was caught in the curse-bringing snare of the
land.

But he who seduced her, clave to her, his soul in that band
Which love softly weaves into chains that no smith's tool can
break,

A captive who would not the bonds that restrained him forsake.
He loved her, proud prince of the Hivites, he loved her so well,
That tenderness tangled his tongue in its magical spell.
He spoke to her gently and kindly; he plead with his sire
To win from the strangers this maiden to bless his hearth-fire.

Then Jacob had news of the sin that was done to his child;
His sons were afield.

He was silent, betrayed not the wild
And troubled emotions that stirred him. The news of the deed
Reached the ears of his sons and their anger was bitter indeed.

Then Hamor came to them with Shechem, not heeding their pale
And passionate faces. He spoke to their father and said:

"The soul of my son loves thy daughter; he wishes to wed
The beautiful maid. Let him have her, I pray, as his wife.
Let this be our custom hereafter, in common good rife;

Our sons shall find wives 'mongst your daughters, your sons
among ours,
And ye shall dwell with us; the land with its sunshine and
showers,
Its seed-time and harvest, its cold and its heat shall be ours
In common; in trading and herding your wealth shall increase,
Possessed of the good that we offer, in union and peace."

Then Shechem the lover plead further with brothers and sire,
And said, "Let me find favor with you for my heart's desire;
Say unto me what I shall give for the maiden I love;
No dowry too great shall be, no gift too precious to prove
My deep love for your daughter; but give me the damsel to wife
And I will return for her gladly my best."

Filled with strife

The sons of the patriarch spake at this eloquent plea
Of Shechem and Hamor his father, with sly treachery,
Because of the wrong that was done to their sister, whose sting
Had entered their hearts, deeply poisoning faith's noble spring.
They said with deceit, "This is something unlawful to do,
To give her we love to an uncircumcised; we should rue
Such a deed, false to all our beliefs; but to this we agree:
Take upon you this rite if our future united shall be.
That done, then our daughters may wed you; yours we will
espouse,
One land and one purpose our people's best efforts arouse.
But if ye refuse circumcision then we will be gone,
And with us our daughter; this deed by your men must be done."

Then Hamor was pleased with the answer and Shechem as well.
The young man deferred not the deed for so sweet was the spell
The daughter of Jacob cast o'er him, no cost was too great

To gain her in honor whose face filled his mind, soon and late.
More honorable than the house of his father was he
And his eye saw the good to be gained in this new amity.

Then Hamor and Shechem came unto their own city's gate,
And communed with the men of their city and said,

"We await
Your help. These are peaceable men. Let them dwell in the
land,

And trade therein, for it is large enough, fertile and grand.
Let us take their daughters to wives and our own let them wed;
But they have one thing which they ask of us," so Shechem said,
"They consent to dwell with us and be as one people if we
Will be circumcised even as they.

See how prosperously
They have fared. Shall not their herds be ours and their beasts
and their goods?

There is gain for us all if we join in this new brotherhood."
And the people consented and all who passed out of the gate
Of the city were circumcised, led by a pitiless fate.

Upon the third day when the men were unable to fight,
Came Levi and Simeon, Jacob's two sons in their might,
The brethren of Dinah, each man with his sword in hand
And boldly attacked the doomed town as they basely had planned.
They slew all the males with their prince by the edge of the
sword,

And from Shechem's house they took Dinah. By way of reward
For avenging their sister, they seized all the beasts in the field,
Oxen, asses and sheep, with the wealth of the town which would
yield

Great returns, with the children and wives. Thus they spoiled

the dead prince,
In their cruel revenge and bereft the bare homes of defense.

Then Jacob said, "Ye have made trouble indeed for my life,
'Mongst all those that dwell in the land, with long discord and
strife,

And I, being few, they shall gather together against me
And slay me. I shall be destroyed and my house. Thus ye
wronged me."

"And should he then treat as a harlot, our sister?" they said.
The fierce retribution was ended. The sinner was dead.

XV.

"Arise, go up to Bethel and dwell there."

Then Jehovah appeared to his servant with fatherly care
And showed his a plain path to walk in amid his despair.
He said,

"Rise and go up to Bethel! There thou shalt abide,
And make there an altar to God, as afore-time thy guide,
When from Esau thy brother thou fledst and didst sleep on a
stone,
Till the angelic hosts cheered thy heart, full of sorrow, alone.
I have not forgotten my promises; I will remain
Thy Helper."

The dream of the past rose before him again,
And Jacob remembered God's word was ne'er given in vain.
With faith making all tasks the lighter, the patriarch rose.
"Put forth your strange gods!" he commanded, "Be clean!
Change your clothes!

Arise and go forward to Bethel. There I will uprear
A shrine unto God who has heard me in seasons of fear,
Who answered me kindly in times of my need and distress,
And went on the way with me, so to encourage and bless."
The strange gods provoking false worship to Jacob were given.
He hid them with trinkets and ear-rings where reached toward
heaven
An oak's tossing branches.

Forth journeyed the people of God
Unharm'd by the cities around 'neath His sheltering rod,
For over the valleys and hill-sides had fallen a fear,
An awe-stricken reverence saying, "Jehovah is here."

The home he had loved was deserted, the altar to God,
In the field bought of Hamor, as southward the patriarch trod
The vale of the rock-fretted Jordan as God had ordained,
Regretting the treacherous crime which his honor profaned.
At last they appeared before Bethel, the household and sire,
With all their possessions and there by the glowing camp-fire,
The patriarch told of his lonely night's rest, long ago,
How he dreamed as he lay on his pillow of stone of a slow
Sweet radiance growing to glorious light o'er his head,
And a ladder, heaven-high where the angels ascended; their Head
Was the Lord who addressed him with promises splendid and
strong,

Declaring the land where he lay to his heirs should belong
That they should increase into numbers like sands of the sea,
That He through all troubles and journeys his Helper would be.

To the wives the strange vision seemed present, the sons heard
each word;

A future of hope lay before them, secured by God's word.
The tale of the past filled each heart with an earnest desire
To share in the good Jacob told of before the camp-fire.
There he reverently built an altar and gave it the name
El-Bethel, since there God in mercy his Helper became.
God saw his devotion and vouchsafed His presence again.
He blessed him and said, "From henceforward is Israel thy name
And Jacob no longer; I am the Lord God, the Almighty.
Be fruitful and multiply; nations shall rise by and by,
Thy descendants and rulers and kings shall come forth from
thy loins,

With mighty dominion and power which no limit confines;
And the land which I gave unto Abraham and to thy sire,
I will give it to thee and thy seed, to it they may aspire."

God passed from the sight of His servant; a hush filled the air,
Like the reverent, worshipful stillness that falls after prayer.
There Jacob erected a pillar of stone to his God,
And on it poured oil and drink-offerings, thus if he could,
To strengthen allegiance to One who had led him thus far,
Who promised a race to him, numberless as heaven's stars.
The place where the vision celestial appeared, Jacob named
El-Bethel, the House of God, where He had calmly proclaimed,
In generous love the great purpose His wisdom had claimed.

XVI.

"Thou shalt have this son also."

The Lord had bestowed upon Jacob, as often before,
At the time of his bitterest need, His great presence, and o'er
And o'er, had repeated His wonderful promises, filling
The heart of His servant with love and His Spirit's indwelling.
The chalice of woe stood before him, the last bitter draught
That under the old name of childhood by Jacob was quaffed,
Before heavy afflictions and terrors of years passed away
Had fitted his life to the new name, the right to hold sway
In the wonderful empire of spirit.

The trouble that came
Was bound as the bitterest grief often is with the name
Of the tenderest hope. For again the sweet promise of mother-
hood
Was Rachel's. They journeyed from Bethel to Ephrath, but
thither could
Go no farther. The mother's great agony heavily lay
Upon her. Her dying ears heard the brave promise,

"To-day

Thou shalt have this son also; fear not."

As her soul passed away
(For she died), Rachel named him "Benoni" the son of her grief,
But he was called "Benjamin" (of the right hand) by the chief.
Rachel's beautiful season of girlhood, her womanhood's cares
And troubles, her years of rebellion were gone like the airs
That refresh us and vanish, or dream of a fading mirage;
And the day of her burial came, for the grave's mighty rage
Against men is ne'er ended, and Rachel like all who have lived

Was gone to her place to be mourned by the loved who survived.

By Bethlehem-Ephrath they buried her, where the bright Star
Which long after appeared to the Wise Men and led them afar,
Shone down on the birth-place of Christ.

Israel looked on his wife
Cold, silent and pale in her shroud; Rachel, first thought in life
Next to God and His care, since that ever-new day at the well,
Where in far Padan-Aram he met her. No mere words can tell
What strong links of love are in-woven with plain household
deeds,

With morning and noon-day and evening when loving eye heeds
The one most beloved and dear fingers tenderly weave
Bright memories into the woof of life, the more to grieve
The heart that is empty, when lifeless forever they lie,
Unheeding the voice that has cried, "Do not die! Do not die!"

Subdued, the impetuous seeker of all he desired,
Of birth-right, of blessing and wife, who had ever aspired
To his ends with a vigorous force that unerringly won
In the earlier days; Jacob bowed at God's throne.
He could not bring back her he loved; she was gone, but he
found

In Jehovah a solace and hope for his sorrow profound.
Another world lay just beyond that his eyes could not see,
And there he would find his beloved when he should be free.

"The child shall become my last keepsake from one cherished
ever,

And his features bring back her dear face to me, over and over."
Said Jacob; love seeks some reminder, some token forever.

A pillar of stone marked the sepulchre lonely that cleft
Its chasm of sorrow across the way of the bereft.

To trouble comes trouble. The man who is wise will prepare
In grief as in joy heaven's unknown allotments to bear
He knew when he came to his home that his mother was gone
Ne'er to welcome the sight, the embrace of her best-beloved son,
And Isaac was laden with years, heavy-laden and worn.
Death brought him release, full of days, and heart-worn
By his long life's afflictions. Thus Israel's lot was to mourn
The death of his father and offer with Esau the rite
To the dead which due honor and filial love would incite.

No sound is heard by the silent dead.
It matters not! It matters not,
Whether the voices are harsh or kind,
That rise and fall with the wandering wind.
It matters not, it matters not.

No sight is left to the cold, still corse,
None works it ill, none works it ill,
The face that smiles or the eye that weeps,
Or the cheek to which love's warm fire leaps,
It sees not good or ill.

The dead hands lie there cold and still.
Nor cruel blow, nor cruel blow
Can harm; no touch or rough, or sweet,
Can reach the still hands' last retreat.
They have no joy, no woe.

The dead so long, so silently
Lie 'neath the sky's blue arch
And make no moan, and make no moan.
The living only groan and pray
And wish for night and wish for day,
And love and strive unrestfully,
The dead lie down all peacefully,
Nor mind the steady march
Of the rude world battling constantly.

XVII.

"Joseph was feeding the flock with his brethren."

Who loves e'er must suffer. The strange force is lavishly spent
Upon the ideal in whom all enchantments are blent.

The growth from the love of desire to the love that seeks naught
But the good of the loved one is slow and with suffering fraught.

Love's power was supreme over Israel; mother's love first

His life with its tangle of influence aided and cursed;

Then maid's love as sweet as the first rosy blush of the dawn,

And wife's love, as true to its course as the stream rolling on.

Now love for his son had the first place; to Joseph was given

His heart's benediction and thought, earnest prayers to heaven.

His nature, intense and persistent, strove ever to do

Life's work with a fire, slow but fervent, that burned through
and through

His innermost spirit; his wrestling with God had allayed,

By Jabbok's dark ford, the self-will that his old life had swayed.

His strong, steadfast love for Jehovah was foremost and lent

Its calm to the changing emotions that struggled or blent

In his nature.

His great love for Joseph had grown from the days
When he came to supply a long need with his sweet childish
grace.

With Rachel he watched his first movements, his tottering feet
Their first steps essaying, with laughing attempt and defeat.

They taught him the first words together and shared in the joy
Of seeing him learn from his brothers their daily employ.

A memento of unbound blessings, of halcyon days

Was Joseph, the son of his mother, the heir of his race.

Yes, heir! And in token he gave him a robe gay and bright,

A coat many-colored, the heir's rightful pride and delight.

The stern sons of Leah were jealous, they hated this pet,
And his father's unlimited love made them angrier yet.
What right had this child of the household, this untutored boy
To the title and name of the eldest, the chief's haughty joy?

Then Joseph in youth's careless fashion bore tales and dreamed
dreams.

His brothers all hated him, spoke to him harshly; their schemes
Were against his advancement. Still Joseph was careless and
free,

Not heeding their harshness and telling his thoughts guilelessly.

He said, "We were binding our sheaves in the field, and behold!
My sheaf stood alone while your sheaves in obeisance all rolled
On the earth before mine."

And his brethren said, "What! Shalt
thou reign

In pride over us, making good thy desired domain?"

They hated him worse for his dreams and his words than before.

He dreamed then another dream; heedlessly telling it o'er,
He stirred up their wrath;

"Now the sun and the moon," so he
said,

"And eleven bright stars in the sky have to me bowed the head."

His father rebuked him and said, in contemptuous sorrow,
"Shall I and thy mother and brethren on some strange to-morrow,
Indeed bow ourselves to the earth before thee? Heed thy tongue!"
His brothers were envious, but in the sire's head rung

The youthful prediction and often when walking alone,
He thought of the fanciful vision with meaning unknown,
But no stranger than others Jehovah had graciously shown.

The herbage was scant about Hebron, the flocks became lean;
So the sons journeyed with them to Shechem, where fields wide
and green -

Awaited the dripping-tongued ruminants, eager for food,
And at length in the redolent meadows the happy kine stood.

Then Israel spake unto Joseph, "Thy brethren are gone
For pasturage yonder to Shechem, thou too must be gone;
I must send thee hence to them for tidings."

He said, "Here am I!"

"See if it be well with them, if the time blithely pass by;
See if it be well with thy brethren and well with the flocks,
And then bring me word again."

No hostile treatment e'er shocks
The light heart of boyhood for long. Joseph went forth from
Hebron,

Where the vale was so bare that the deer could find little to
feed on,

The gray wolf no lair and the wild things from hunger were tame.
Thence happily into the valley of Shechem he came;
But wandering hither and thither found none of his name.

A stranger observing his search through the meadows inquired
What he sought with such earnestness, and by his kindness in-
spired,

Joseph answered, "I seek for my brethren, I pray, dost thou know
Where they pasture their flocks now and whither in search I
must go?"

The stranger said,

“They are gone hence and I heard them declare

They would journey to Dothan where pasturage is and to spare.”
So Joseph continued to Dothan his wearisome way,
And found flocks and shepherds at rest in the brilliant noon-day.

The brethren beheld him afar and their smouldering hate
Burst in flame, while they cunningly plotted a terrible fate
For the youth which the thought of their father did not mitigate.
They said, “Let us slay him, this dreamer that comes in his
pride.

Come slay him! Some pit shall his grave, dark and lonely
provide.

And then we will say that some beast has devoured him. Aha!
We shall see if his dreams will make true to him all that he
saw.”

When Reuben was told of the plot, his heart spoke for his father,
And he rescued him out of their hands, saying,

“Kill him not,
rather

Than shed the boy’s blood, let us cast him down into this pit
In the wilderness, laying no hand on him.”

With fertile wit
He thought to deliver him thus from their hands and restore
The terrified boy, without harm, to his father once more.

Half heeding his words they attended with envious hate
Joseph’s coming. The sight of him filled them with fury so
great

That their hands clutched the air. The poor boy they could

hardly await.

His coat of bright colors they tore with rude hands from his back.

They seized him with violence; through the rough gravel their track

Encircled the pit; down they cast him with merciless jeer.

At their blows and revilings his boy's courage turned into fear.

The dark yawning mouth of the pit gaped to take in the youth,

And he fell to the dry, empty bottom, dazed, groaning, in truth

Half dead with the cruel abuse and the fear in his heart.

While he lay there in silence enduring the pitiless dart

Of pain, the harsh brethren sat down to eat bread. He who came

From afar to inquire of their welfare, could hear them defame

His father for unequal love. As they feasted and talked,

He lay there hurt, hungry and faint and their comradeship
mocked

His troubled heart sadly.

While eating they looked and, behold,

Brown Ishmaelites, in a caravan, fearless and bold,

Came from Mount Gilead, on their beasts bearing spices and
myrrh,

And balm which they carried to Egypt for golden transfer

Then Judah, the merciful, spake to his brethren and said,

"What profits it us if our brother through our deed be dead,

And we hide his blood; hear my brethren, a much better way;

To the Ishmaelites let us sell him and send him away

From us. Let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother,

Our flesh and our blood, for his father is also our father!"

And the men were content. Their rough temper had weakened;

the gain

To be had from the traders for Joseph was mixed with a vain
Delight at release from a rival whose presence was pain.
The Midianite caravan neared them; they drew from the pit
The young boy they hated, not heeding his trouble, not hit
By sharp-stinging conscience, nor thinking of Israel's grief,
For twenty poor pieces of silver, they sold like a thief,
The son of their father, they saw his lithe hands bound, in pain,
Amid useless wrestling and pitiful pleas that were vain.
His call, "Father! Father!" was borne on the unhearing wind.
No eye looked with mercy; no heart there was moved to be
kind.

The brief halt was over and southward the caravan went
To seek in the rich land of Egypt the trader's content.
The brethren looked not on the caravan, not on the lad,
Led helplessly from them; their faces all cruel, none sad
Were turned to the shreds of the feast or the cattle and sheep
That wandered in pasture or lay in the noon-tide asleep.

"Father! Father!

Could the wind speak, it would say
That thy son is sold to-day,
To the arms of slavery.
But the wind's soft monotone
Utters words to thee unknown
Nor translates to thee my moan.

"Father! Father!

I am young and strong and brave.
I must bear to be a slave,
But thy comfort who shall crave?

Who shall help thee bear the pain
Of my loss, again, again,
When thou seekest me in vain?

“Father! Father!
Egypt’s river, Hebron’s sands
Lie in widely distant lands,
But the steadfast, unseen bands
Of affection, stretch and hold
Farther yet, with power untold
By their strands of spotless gold.

“Father! Father!
The Lord God will hear thy cry
As the tempest passes by
With its rude intensity.
He will calm the beating storm,
He will shelter thee from harm
By His great almighty arm.”

When Reuben returned to the pit his scared eyes sought in vain
For Joseph’s dark form at the bottom. Again and again
He called him and sought for him, living or dead in the field,
But Joseph was gone; to his brethren he wildly revealed
By his clothing all rent, his anxiety bitter and deep.

“He is not,” he said, “and I, where shall I go, who should keep
Such guard that no harm could attack him, what tale shall I
bear
Unto Israel, his much-loving father whom ye would not spare?”

Then the brethren took Joseph's bright coat, killed a kid of the goats,

And dipping the garment in blood, with the lie in their throats,
Sent the coat of bright colors and brought it in fear to their sire.
They said, "We have found this afield and have come to inquire
If this be the garment of Joseph or no; thou dost see
The blood-stains upon it."

Wild fear laid its hand cruelly
Upon him. He knew it was Joseph's, the beautiful boy
He had chosen as heir and had kept in his heart, his chief joy.
With trembling he sank to the still earth and said, "It is his
Some beast, fierce and strong has attacked him. Who knows
where he is?

His bones lie on some unknown field or in some cavern dark
Where none who has loved him may know, or his resting-place
mark."

His voice sank away with an awful and ominous hush
That no word of hope could disturb. The harsh blow seemed to
crush

The heart of the father and break it with infinite pain.

The sons could say nothing; their tardy repentance was vain.
They knew not the place where the lad was; their thoughts must
again

Return to the sad scene of barter; the wail of the boy
Crying, "Father!" and still again, "Father!" disturb every joy

Then Israel put sack-cloth upon him, his clothing he rent,
While, long days and nights, his dark thought o'er the tragedy
went.

The love that so richly blessed Rachel had found in her son
A sweet consolation when that beloved mother was gone.

Now both were departed! How broken the heart on that day
When harshly the tendrils encircling the loved break away
'Neath the stern hand of fate. God alone knows the balm for the
wound,

Alone can give healing, inwrapping His perfect love round,
With bindings of ease-giving Time; bring new faces and friends,
Till gently and sweetly the old with new fellowship blends.

No heart little tender or loving could share in the grief
That swept like a wild raging torrent through Israel, the chief.
The sons who had wrought the great evil were touched by his
woe,

And sought as they could to assuage the continuous flow
Of his heart-broken anguish. His sons and his daughters in vain
Rose up and attempted to comfort him. Unceasing pain
Gnawed his heart and he said, "I shall go to the grave from this
strain

Of unsolaced mourning; in death alone is there relief
For my heart-breaking sorrow, the unlighted gloom of my grief."

XVIII.

"And all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn."

A dearth swept the nations and hunger walked forth in the lands,
And the woodlands, the fields and the meadows were bare as the
sands.

The spring brought no green to the fields and the summer no
bloom

The autumn no reaping of harvests for winter's store-room.

The bins full to bursting before were now empty and bare,
And the skeleton track of starvation was seen everywhere.

'Twas hard for the herds as they scattered o'er hill-side and
plain

In search of scant herbage, dried out by the absence of rain,
And hard for the children who stretched forth their lean hands
for bread

From the lessening store upon which they were sparingly fed
With eager-eyed hunger, to face want with unspoken dread.

The need struck the household of Israel, they too must share
With all that they loved, in the famine's wide-spreading despair.
They heard of the great stores in Egypt, the man who laid by
Seven rich years of corn, garnered up in a countless supply
As a surplus of plenty for gaunt hungry years drawing nigh.
The food grew still lower in Hebron; the dark looks of grief
And despair, full of useless regret, struck the heart of the
chief.

Said Jacob, "Why look ye upon one another? Behold,
I hear there is corn still in Egypt. Go, buy! Here is gold.

Get you down and bring thence what we need that we live and not die.

Go at once and bring back for our wants an abundant supply.
But let Benjamin tarry with me that no mischief befall
My last, dearest treasure. Make haste now, my sons, for us all."

The days slowly follow each other when out from the home
Those who filled it with life have departed. The father alone
With the servants and Benjamin toiled 'midst the herds to supply
Their needs as they could till the season of famine passed by.
As the reckoned-on days of return for the brethren drew near,
They watched the far signs of the caravans with hope and fear,
And oft, disappointment, for all ways to Egypt were worn,
With the tread of the caravans thither by long hunger borne.

At last o'er the long stretch of desert they saw them advance.
They counted but nine men. The fear of some fatal mischance
Struck the father. He went forth to meet them and saw that
the rest

Were there except Simeon. Then his tried heart could not rest
Till he heard all their tidings. They told of their journey; the
test,

Of the powerful ruler of Egypt who claimed they were spies
Who sought the land's weaknesses clad in that innocent guise.

"We said, 'We are no spies,'" said Reuben, "'But men just and true.

We are come from twelve brethren, one dead, one at home there
to do

For his father in Canaan who cannot his presence forego.'
Then the lord of the country replied, 'Hereby shall I know
If ye are indeed true.

Let one brother remain here with me,
And take food for the needs of your households; go without
delay

And bring me the boy that you speak of, and thus I shall know
That ye are true men and no spies, and can rightly bestow
The freedom to trade in the country. Then will I deliver
The brother I hold as a hostage.'

We left the proud ruler
And lading our asses with corn we set forth on our journey.
When Levi had opened his sack in the inn, lo, his money
Was there in the sack's mouth! He said to us, 'Here is my gold
In the mouth of my sack.' Then our hearts sank within us. The
cold
Sweat of fear damped our foreheads. We said, 'What is this
God has done?'
The weight of our trouble has hampered our long journey home."

Then Jacob said, "Open your sacks," and they opened them.
Who

Can imagine the wonder and fear that disturbed them anew,
When each found his money rolled up in the mouth of his sack,
And knew some mysterious trouble had followed them back.
Then Jacob, their father, said unto them, "Ye have bereaved
My heart of my children. Long since Joseph, so bitterly grieved
For, is not, and now Simeon. Ye would take Benjamin hence.
These things are against me and life offers no recompense."

Then Reuben spake unto his father and said, "Slay my sons
If I bring him not unto thee safely. For too soon there comes
Again the gaunt day crying, 'Bread,' and our children and herds
Will die without that which the rich land of Egypt affords."

Then Israel said, "No, my son shall not go down with you,
For his brother is dead, he alone. Shall I risk his life too?
If mischief befall Benjamin in the way which ye go,
Ye shall bring my gray hairs, sorrowing, to the grave, dark and
low."

The sons silently bowed to the will of their father and chief,
Nor could they dispute him, they who were the cause of his
grief.

Between their old father's affection and famine's rude hand,
They stood, looking on while the shadow of want swept the land,
Like the on-coming shadows of evening that promise no light,
As they steadily gather and darken, but heaviest night.
The hunger that once had drawn fetters about them, again
Engirt them more closely and harshly, with need's stronger
chain.

They said nothing; they were no cowards; they dared face the
front

Of famine and bear without murmur, need's unyielding brunt.

XIX.

"And the famine was sore in the land."

They had eaten the corn which they brought out of Egypt. At
last

Their father said, hope of a harvest at home being past,
"Go buy us a little to eat out of Egypt again."

Then Judah took courage and said, "To go thither is vain
Without Benjamin. Sternly the man did protest unto us,
Saying, 'Ye shall not look on my face or be welcome unless
Your brother be with you.'"

In conflict, with wavering will,
Full of anguish, spake Israel, "Why have ye dealt me this ill?
Why told ye him aught of your brother; to trouble me still?"

"He asked," they replied, "of our kindred, our father and
whether

A brother remained in our household. Our thoughts did not
gather

From this any harm, and we answered his questions as freely
As he asked. Could we know he would say with a dignity duly
Regarding his station, 'Bring hither your brother or else
Ye shall see me no more?'"

As the fierce force of hunger impels
Judah further besought him: "Send Benjamin thither with me,
And let food be provided, my father, for us and for thee,
And I will be surety; require him again at my hand;
If I leave him there I will always the bitter blame stand.
We linger too long, for our need becomes heavy and sore,
Had we not delayed we had brought food in plenty before."

At last Israel yielded, and hoping he might pacify
The man that they feared, he commanded a double supply
Of gold to be taken, and added a present as well,
Of myrrh, spices, honey, and balm with its medicant spell,
Nuts, almonds and also the money they found in each sack;
And last of all Benjamin, that which his heart could but rack.

"The Almighty God give you mercy before this strange man,
That Benjamin come to our home with his brother again,
We must trust in Jehovah, on whom I have ne'er called in vain.
And if I must lose them I must! In bereavement I go
Through a life full of sorrow and loss, in great trouble and woe."

Life is mingled gain and loss,
 With its happiness, its grief,
With the shade of many a cross,
 In relief,
Glooming o'er it, far away,
Nearing with the dawning day,
 Standing massively across
The dark way.

Life is tangled sun and shade,
 With its hopes, its heavy fears,
Which calm days of peace invade;
 Big with tears.
Life is promise, life is pain,
Life is sunshine, life is rain,
 But our little hopes it bears
Not in vain.

Though our days are hurt and marred
 By its damage and we bear
Souls by many a hard thrust scarred,
 Full of care,
By strange ways we cannot know,
To large heights our spirits grow,
 And with nobler thought and word
Overflow.

XX.

"I am Joseph; doth my father yet live?"

The head of the old man was bowed; with his back to the door
He sat in his tent and the sons that were gone, brooded o'er
Re-counting the days of their absence, the time of return
Seemed near to his spiritless heart, yet dull hope did not burn
Within him, cast down by his fear and the losses of yore,
And by thoughts of the faces beloved, to be looked on no more.

A step sounded lightly beside him; a soft dimpled hand
Gently slipped into his and his grand-child said,

"Out on the sand

I saw father with people and beasts coming far o'er the land.
I hastened to tell thee, for thou wilt be happy, I know,
To hear they are coming; thou'st waited and watched through the
slow,
Slow days; and there must be strange news for the caravan
train
Stretches out like a river, away o'er the gray, dusty plain."

E'er she ceased Judah came and beside him stood Benjamin,
bright

With the gay warmth of youth and his joy at his father's delight.
The old man was dazed at the vision. His courage awoke.
He rose, sat again, then with faltering accents he spoke:
"Are ye then returned, Oh my sons? Is God thus good to me?"

With Simeon we have returned, full of good news for thee,
Now, hear! Joseph lives and the great chief of Egypt is he!
He made himself known to us kindly and with clemency."

Israel stood still and dumb at the words, for he could not believe

That his son was still living; that he should his dear son receive!

His heart fainted within him; it seemed that his life would depart,

But they carried him forth to the wains from his son, to impart
More faith in their truth and at last he revived and took heart.

"Now hear all the news of our journey!" said Judah who bore
The right to be speaker from all he had dared to endure.

"We went down to Egypt; before the great ruler were led,
And thence forth from the hall to his home where rich splendor
was spread

For our unwonted eyes. We thought chiefly of danger ahead,
With hearts full of fear for the gold that mysteriously
Lay hid in our sacks as we last went our Canaanward way.
For that we despaired, for that cause he might sell us perchance,
And take us for slaves, with our asses.

So, at the first chance,
We spoke with the steward, and told of the burden of gold
In our sacks. 'We have brought it,' we told him, 'and more with
the old
To buy as our need is. Who put back the coin we know not.'

He said, 'Peace be yours. Have no fear! God has favored your
lot.

I had pay for all.'

Then he brought to us Simeon. All
Seemed well. We had water for washing; our asses were fed.
At my call

Was brought forth the present you sent. This we neatly prepared

For the ruler's appearance at noon; for his bounty we shared,
'Twas said,

At last he came in with his train. We made haste
To bring him the present and bowed to the earth, anxious-faced.

He asked of our welfare, of you, whether living and well.
We said, 'He is living, my lord, he still lives and is well.'
We bowed low before him again, our deep rev'rence to show.

Then he looked and saw Benjamin, said, 'Is this he, I would know,
Your brother, of whom ye have spoken?' Then, 'God show thee
favor, my son!'

He turned from us suddenly then and we stood there alone.
He returned in a little, pale-faced, and gave orders to dine.
He ate by himself, we together; as if by design
The Egyptians apart, and we learned that they held it a sin
For them to break bread with the Hebrews. We sat there by
him

In order of age as he bade us. He honored our board
With food from his table. We marveled at each gracious word,
And his manner toward us.

To Benjamin five times as much
As to us he apportioned; our cheer rose at each kindly touch.

The feast being over we slept, and when morn's gray light broke,
They sent us away with our asses. No presage awoke
Our calm hearts to fear, for we all were together and bound
For Canaan and you, Father. Think what there was to astound
Our minds when the tall steward sternly approached and our
ears

At his words of reproach with their terrible burden of fears;

"Wherefore have ye given for good, evil? The cup of my lord
By which he fortelleth the future is gone. What reward
For hospitable entertainment is this? 'Tis not right!"

We said, 'Wherefore speak'st thou these words, Here we stand
in God's sight.

God forbid that we sin in this wise. E'en the money we found
In our sacks' mouths we brought back to Egypt. Why shouldest
thou wound

Our company honest? How could we steal aught from thy lord?
If any among us possess it, be this his reward,

Let his die at thy hands. We as well will thy bond-servants be.'
'It is well!' he made answer. 'With whom it is found, he shall
be

My servant, and ye shall be blameless.'

Then hasted we down

with our sacks,

And opened them freely. What happened my tried heart still
racks.

The cup was in Benjamin's sack's mouth! Our clothing we rent,
And lading our asses, back toward the city we went,
My brethren and I.

The great ruler still tarried at home.

We bowed in deep homage before him with unuttered groan.

He said, 'What is this ye have done? Wist ye not, I divine?'

'Oh, what shall we speak to my lord,' thus I cried, 'How explain
This bootless iniquity? We are thy servants indeed,
Both we and our brother whose sin was this unexplained deed.'

The ruler replied, 'God forbid! Let him who had my cup

Do service with me. To your father the rest shall go up.'

I drew near him and said, 'Oh my lord let me speak but a word.
Let not anger burn hot in thine heart but thy favor accord,
For thou art as Pharaoh. My lord asked us news of our kin.
We answered, 'Our father is old; he will soon enter in
To his home. Our one brother is dead, one remains to his sire,
The last seed of his mother, beloved with a measureless fire.'

Thou said'st, 'Bring him hither to me, I would this son behold.'
We answered, 'He cannot come thence, for his sire is so old,
That for this son to leave him were death. He is cherished the
more
Because of the brother he lost through misfortune, of yore.'

Thou saidest, 'Except he come with you, no more shall my face,
Or goods with their blessing, your hungering poverty grace.'

We went to our father and told him the words of my lord.
The day of dire want came at last. 'Bring us food!' was his word.

We said, 'Without Benjamin's presence 'tis useless to go,
Unless he be with us, the ruler has said, we all know,
That he will not henceforward his great face in our favor show.'

Then murmured thy servant my father, 'My wife had two sons,
As ye know; I let one go, one morning. Through succeeding suns
I saw him no more and I said, Some wild beast has devoured
him.

Now this one ye seek to take forth from my care and expose in
Some terrible danger. If he should be hurt ye will bring
My gray hairs in grief to the grave.'

There is not anything
That would bring us more sorrow than this. I was surety for
him.

Let me stay in his stead. Let me suffer the blame for this sin.
Then I shall not see evil tidings brought home to my sire,
Whose shoulders are bent and whose eyes have through tears
lost their fire.'

Then a strange thing befell us, my father. He ordered the throng
Away with a voice low and trembling and hastened along
Toward us in our circle of trial with weeping so loud,
'Twas heard by the waiting Egyptians, the court and the crowd.
He said, 'I am Joseph, your brother!' His tears poured like
rain.

'Doth my father yet live, and shall I see his face yet again?'

Our fearful hearts sank in our bosoms. Our tongues could not
give

An answer to him we had injured; for who could forgive
Such inhuman cruelty? Joseph was sold as a slave
By us into Egypt, thou know'st, Father. How could we crave
A pardon for crime so unnatural. Swift to our thought
Rose the day that we sold him, and our helpless grief at thy lot
Who so loved him; with shame at the sin that had hid with us all
By night and by day.

Through our turbulent thoughts came a call
From Joseph. 'Come near me, my brethren, I pray.' So he spoke,
And somehow within us a hope sweet and comforting woke.
He said,

, 'I am Joseph your brother; by your hands once sold
Into Egypt; be not grieved therefor; be not angered at old
Bad deeds with yourselves, for Jehovah had need of me here.

'Twas He sent me thence to provide for this want, food and cheer.

This famine shall last for five years and but two years are gone.
Go tell to my father the great thing Jehovah has done,
In sending me here in the rich years with harvests o'ergrown
To garner the stores for the lean years of famine, unknown.

Persuade him to come without tarrying. His be the land
Of Goshen, the Land of the Shepherds, bestowed by my hand,
For I am appointed by Pharaoh as chief of the land
For long years, tell him. Near shall he dwell and in plenty at home,

His children besides, and their children. Oh, urge him to come!
Say, 'There will I nourish thee. Five years of famine remain,
If yonder in Canaan thy life thou shouldst seek to maintain,
Then thou and thy household and flocks would feel want's biting pain.'

He said, 'Your eyes see as do Benjamin's; 'tis I indeed.
Then tell all my glory to Israel and bring him with speed.'
He fell upon Benjamin's neck, warmly kissed him and wept,
Then kissed us all, weeping the while as we wept, too, o'er him.
We spoke of the years that so strangely eventful have been,
The regret of the past and the burdensome weight of our sin.

Then Pharaoh with pleasure has heard too of our family,
And Joseph has orders to send for thee, Father, for thee
And thy flocks and thy herds and thy little ones, all we hold dear,
Our needs with the good and the fatness of Egypt to cheer."

Thus Judah concluded, and Israel whose heart had been faint

With doubt at the first, unbelievable news, through a taint
That the falsehood of years made the stronger, gained faith at
the sight

Of the great wagons Joseph sent for him. At last swept the
light

Of credence upon him. He said,

“’Tis enough. He still lives.

I will seek my son e’er I go hence. God is gracious who gives
This last benediction to me, e’er my life’s sands are run;
For Joseph shall heal bitted wounds which his loss left upon
My heart long ago. I shall see the dear face of my son.”

The souls in his household, all numbered, were three-score and ten.

Jehovah his unfailing help and protector had been;
His promise at Bethel, fulfilled with an infinite love,
Gave him faith for a future safe-guarded with grace from above.

XXII.

"And Joseph made ready his chariot and went up to meet Israel,
his father."

* * * * *

A rider made haste o'er the desert. He threaded the ways
Of wilderness, known through his journeys in gloomier days.
He bore unto Joseph the news that his sire, lost so long,
Was journeying Egypt-ward, eager to meet him and strong.

Kind Judah rejoiced in the tidings. Still fresh was the day,
When seeking to save him from death he had helped send away
His brother, an unfriended slave, to a pitiless land,
Depriving the sire of his son, bringing gloom to their band.
The parting was o'er through the guidance of God's gracious
hand,

And the long years of need were now ended, the famine assuaged,
Through God's great disclosure to Joseph whose kindness was
guaged

By the depth of his brotherly love. Free his pardon as light,
With its blessing and refuge for them after wrong's heavy night.

He sped on his journey, light-hearted; to Joseph he bore,
With dignity fitting, the news that the father once more
Sought the face of his son.

At once Joseph departed from home,
With an escort of state for the land to which Israel would come.
With Judah, his brother beside him, through Egypt he went,
While the people thronged forth to do homage and lavishly spent
Their honors on him who with forethought when earth's stores
abounded

Had saved them from famine and want with their troubles un-
bounded.

To Judah they also did honor. He was near of kin
To the man who was best-loved in Egypt, their leader of men.
They came thus to Goshen, convoyed by the honoring throng,
Unto him who had hopelessly wept for a lost son so long.

Afar Israel knew of their coming, for quick eager eyes
Beheld the procession, sharp ears heard their cheers and out-
cries.

The people drew back with respect, while their ruler went on
To meet his aged father to whom all due honor was shown.
The old man came forward with trembling to look on the son
Long fancied with Rachel where heaven's bright flowers are
strewn.

The son's heart was wax. Like a woman's his tears freely
flowed

On the neck of that father, so missed through the years, so be-
loved.

On Israel's bowed head and shoulders, the tempests of years
Had spent all the fury which Time, blind and dumb, to men
bears.

The earth with its joys and its sorrows was passing away.
He looked for a home with foundations, a shadowless day.
He said,

"Let me die for the best life can hold has been given:
Thou livest; thy face, Oh my son, I have seen. Near is heaven."

XXIII

"The men were shepherds."

Their method of living in Egypt their brother prepared for.

"I'll make known your coming to Pharaoh. His forethought has
cared for

Your coming to Egypt," he said, "and the life that you lead,
Your flocks and your herds I will speak of, the place they may
feed.

Ye yourselves must appear before Pharaoh and when he shall
ask

Your manner of living reply that the flocks are your task.

With this he will leave you in Goshen where shepherds abide.

The Egyptians look down on a shepherd and thrust him aside."

Then Joseph brought tidings to Pharaoh of all that had passed,
How Israel and all of his house were in Egypt at last.

He presented five brethren to Pharaoh who kindly received them
And asked of their business, the manner of life that engaged
them.

"The flocks are our care," was their answer. "Our father keeps
herds,

And in Egypt we seek for the food which her plenty affords.
We are driven by famine from Canaan, thy favor we need;
The rich land of Goshen gives promise of plenty indeed."

"Make welcome thy father and brethren, Oh Joseph," replied
The ruler. "Let them with the best of the land be supplied.

The land that they choose they may dwell in, in Goshen indeed,

And there shall their cattle and flocks in security feed.
If men of discernment and power among them be found
Appoint them my rulers of cattle on my grazing ground."

XXIV.

"And Jacob blessed Pharaoh."

"Let me look on the face of thy father!" With eagerness spoke
The haughty chief ruler whose interest strangely awoke
In the father of Joseph, the resourceful man who had saved
His people from hunger and want, by great works well achieved.
Some unfathomed power was in Joseph, respected, revered,
Received from that unknown Jehovah whose greatness he feared.
The sire of a son so commanding, his eyes longed to see;
That Israel be summoned to greet him was Pharaoh's decree.

Bowed low on his staff came the chief. As he slowly drew nigh
The force of a faith undiminished lent fire to his eye.
He leaned on the arm of his son in that momentous hour,
When as wandering sheik he was welcomed by Egypt's chief
power.

There sat the proud ruler of Egypt, a land in its prime,
The light of an ignorant world in an untutored time.
The highest of earth's power was his; glory, honor and fame;
All homage and reverence bowed at his magical name.
But the famine-tried chief of the desert rejoiced in one tie
Which made him the guest of the palace, distinguished thereby:
His son was the Friend of Jehovah, with wonderful power,
Beyond that of Pharaoh and greater than all Egypt's dower,
As it ever shall be, for from Israel's race there has sprung
A force that shall govern the world when the new earth is young.

The chief of the wide pathless pasture-lands, humble and weak
Bowed not as a slave to the ruler, his favor to seek.

He stood as his equal, his friend; as a father he blessed
The greatest, most honored of kings where earth's fair hopes
were best.

"Blessed be thou among rulers,
Whose ear is not deaf to the voice
Of God in the night's speechful silence,
Thou who at His word dost rejoice.

Blest be thy land and thy nation,
Whose ear was inclined to give heed
To the meaning and interpretation
By God's chosen prophet decreed.

Blessed be thou among princes,
Who takest the servant of God,
And givest him power in thy kingdom,
Thy ring and thy governing rod.

God whom thou reverest will give thee
Long days full of plenty and peace,
Command o'er the foes that beset thee,
And heirs with thy kingdom's increase."

So Israel blessed him, his hands on the head of the king,
While Pharaoh gave heed as to songs that with melody ring.

"Thine age must be great," Pharaoh said, "Wilt thou tell me its
length?"

"One hundred and twenty, the years of my life, but their strength
Grows feeble. The days of the years of my life have been few
And evil, unworthy my fathers; my pilgrimage too.

The days of the years of my pilgrimage have not attained
The days of the years in whose blessedness heaven they gained."

The patriarch's blessing was ended, the monarch's reply.
With gray head bent over his staff the old chief with a sigh
Of patience, went forth from the king with his powerful son,
To Goshen, the land of their choosing, their household's new
home.

XXV.

"And Israel strengthened himself."

The tenderest ties of affection will ne'er lose their power,
But caught in the strong woof of memory, bind the last hour
Of life with the past, by a gentle intangible power.
When his heart-beats were feeble and lingering, youth's happy
 days
Called Israel back like the echoes of sweet melodies.

The news of his illness brought Joseph, his trouble to ease,
Manassah and Ephraim too by their bright life to please
Their grandfather's age.

 To his sire Joseph's coming was told.
Like duty's far summons, the news strengthened Israel's hold
On life's fleeting force. At love's call he sat up on the bed,
And spoke to his son of the good God had showered on his head.
He said,

 "God Almighty appeared in far Canaan to me
At Bethel and promised in that lonely vigil, to be
My helper, to multiply seed to me, make me a nation,
To give me and mine that great land for a lasting possession.

And now thy two sons born in Egypt before I came thence
Are my sons as Reuben and Simeon, thy recompense
For parting's long sorrow.

 Belovéd, go back through the years
With me to the days of thy childhood. Whatever endears
Our hearts to each other will lead us back into the past.
Dost mind how thy mother looked? Are her dear features still
 cast

In thy memory's mould? Canst recall still how Shechem's rich
meads

Gave food to our cattle, oft drinking by Jordan's dark reeds?
And the meeting with Esau, by Jabbok so dreaded before?
And Laban's fierce chase o'er the desert, the vows that we swore?
How we fled across the bare sand-plains? Our home in the east?
Ah, well we remember! Then life's sweetest harmony ceased
For me, when I journeyed from Padan, for Rachel departed
From life's earthly scenes, near by Ephrath, while I broken-
hearted

Had to bury her there and continue with faith in the Lord
My long years of wandering, led by His unfailing word."

His head sank, his beard swept his bosom, his strength almost
lost

When Joseph's two sons, shyly smiling, his dim vision crossed.

"Who are these?" "My two sons whom God gave me," was
Joseph's reply.

"Then bring them to me that I bless them," he said with a sigh.
Straight and strong were those sons of the south-land and goodly
to see.

The arms of the patriarch held them, one drawn to each knee.
He kissed them and fondled them, feeling the pull of those ties
That bound with the land of the future a land in the skies.

"Thy face I had thought ne'er to look on," said Israel at length,
His right hand in blessing prophetic on Ephraim's head.

But God shows me also thy seed in their beauty and strength."
Then Joseph bowed humbly before him, a child at each hand,
Manasseh at Israel's right, while he made Ephraim stand
At the left as he brought them before him; but Israel laid

"Thou who hast led me all the days,
And taught me in life's unknown ways,
Thou who before my fathers walked
And in Thy mercy with them talked,
Who hast watched o'er me in distress
And kept me with all tenderness,
Oh Angel of Jehovah's throne,
Show favor still unto Thine own.
Bless with Thy grace these lads of mine,
Guide them with majesty divine.
Give them the name my fathers bore
And care and love forevermore.
A mighty nation may they be,
And 'mid earth's changes follow Thee."

Precedence was given to Ephraim, though Joseph explained That Manasseh was older, deserving the honor thus gained. But Israel, predicting the peoples that from them should be Said 'twas Ephraim's to be the greater, by God's wise decree. So, blessing, he blessed them and told how the people would say, "God make thee as Ephraim and as Manasseh," some day.

"Behold my life's journey is ended," he said. "Unto thee And my seed God will give back the land of our fathers, to be Your portion, inherited through His unchanging decree. Neglect not to carry my body to rest in the land Where my fathers have died and are buried. Grant my last demand.
To lie here a stranger in Egypt were a grief to my soul.
Then swear to lay me by my loved ones where Jordan's waves roll."

And he sware as his father besought him, with sorrow of heart,
Foreseeing the day when his sire must in silence depart
To the land of the dead, whose dark shadows no man has the
 skill
To scatter, no insistent love e'er can penetrate, till
God will.

XXVI.

"Gather yourselves together that I may tell you what shall befall
you in the last days."

"My first-born, my might art thou Reuben, my morning of power,
In dignity excellent, able to act, but thy dower
Of influence fails through thy weakness; unstable art thou.
Thou shalt not excel for thy manhood to vileness did bow
Defiling my couch. On thy honor no more could I lean.
Increase what is good in thy nature, subdue what is mean."

"Ye false and unmindful of pity, fierce-hearted and strong,
To you, Levi and Simeon, wrath and destruction belong.
The deep love of Hamor ye scorned in your wrath at his sin.
Ye broke with him your word of honor, ye murdered his men."

"In thy spirit, Judah, forgiveness is found; thou art brave,
Deserving of brotherly honor; thou seekest to save;
Thou soughtst to keep Joseph from peril; acknowledged the
wrong

To Tamar affianced long year unto Shelah, thy son.

'Twas thou who wast surety for Benjamin, thou who wouldst
bear

Instead of thy brother the bondsman's unlightened despair.
Thy future shall be as thy past was for thou shalt increase.
Thou shalt capture thy foes and thine influence never shall
cease;

Thy brethren shall bow down before thee; the lion be thou,
To crouch in thy cunning for such as thy spirit shall cow.

"But farther I see. To my grandfather Abraham, came

Jehovah and said, 'See the stars in their unnumbered train!
Thy seed shall be many like them; all the nations shall be
Enriched and made glad through the people descended from
thee.'

The promise Jehovah renewed unto me on that day
When the angelic spirits from heaven to earth found their way.
To thee, Judah, falls this great honor, beloved evermore,
Since thy seed shall inherit a gift for the nations in store;
A great and unknown benediction which God shall bestow
On men, all-sufficient to give the best good they shall know.
The message prophetic, the promise I give unto thee;
In Judah the scepter remains through long ages to be,
Nor shall from its head a law-giver be taken away
Till Shiloh appears, that unequaled, mysterious day.
To Him shall the people assemble; to Him there shall come
The blinded, the halt and the lame ones, the deaf and the dumb.
Thou gavest thyself for thy brother, nor stintedst the price.
When Shiloh appears he shall offer a full sacrifice."

"To Zidon the borders of Zebulon stretch to the sea,
Where reach out the waves to the sunset his borders shall be."

"To Issacher burdens shall gather; a strong ass, he bears
His two-sided burden; his shoulders are heavy with cares,
But the land to his eyes full of rest and attraction appears.
For this shall his shoulders be laden, for this he shall pay
The price of a pleasant possession in tribute's array."

"A judge of the people be Dan, one of Israel's tribes,
By stealth he shall capture a land without giving of bribes.
He shall sting his foe, fierce as a serpent, or adder-like bite,
And cast out his enemies as the Lord gives him the right."

"To Gad though a troop overcome him shall victory fall
At last, through the triumph of wisdom divine over all."

"To Asher shall blessings o'erflow, he shall govern rich lands.
The dainties he spreads shall be royal, o'erflowing his hands."

"Naphtali, let loose like a hind, shall good sayings impart.
The land's mountain splendor, its valleys shall gladden his heart."

"And Joseph, a bough by a well is full-fruited and strong,
Whose branches run over the wall, fine, abundant and long.
The archers have hated him sorely, have grieved him indeed,
But his arms were made strong by the power of Jehovah, his
Head.

He succoured and nourished his people, the stone of his race,
Saving them from starvation and death, our foundation of grace.

"The heavens are rich for thee, Joseph, for thee and thy seed,
The earth 'neath thy feet shall sustain them in all of their need.
The spirit of life shall breathe on them in life's fertile seat,
And thou shalt inherit the grace by thy service made meet.
Beyond all the blessings my fathers e'er sought to bestow,
To the unchanging hills' farthest summit, thy blessing shall go,
Dear child of my heart, long a stranger to hearth-fire and home,
Compelled for the good of thy kindred in exile to roam."

"Alas, Benjamin, last of my race, evil deeds shall employ,
As a ravening wolf he shall capture, devour and destroy,
Till wrong shall have brought its own payment and he must give
place

To others, and suffer his lot with defeat and disgrace."

"And these are the twelve tribes of Israel, destined to reign
On earth through the years of their heritage, then to attain
Through Him who shall come, gracious favor, while time shall
endure,

Though oftentimes through sin in dishonor and ravished of power.

"At last on the gates of that City where nothing of sin,
Or evil or doubt or impurity shall enter in
Their names shall be found, while the nations in glory and might
Shall receive the inheritance promised and enter with right.
And then from the unreckoned thousands that circle the throne
Shall rise a great song to the Angel by Abraham known,
With the praise of the people of Israel, rescued at last,
By His priceless ransom and safe in the City of Rest."

The blessing was done. Jacob charged them once more to be
true

To the promise of Joseph and give him the burial due.
He said, "To my people I am to be gathered at last;
Let my bones in the cavern of Ephron, the Hittite find rest,
In the field of Machpelah, in Canaan which Abraham bought,
When a burying-place for himself and his children he sought.
There Abraham lies and his wife, there my father, my mother,
There I buried Leah; my heart were content with no other.
It was bought from the children of Heth and near Hebron it lies;
There I would repose in my homeland beneath its fair skies.
God guard you all tenderly, keep you in all Life's long way,
And guide you unerringly through joy and trouble, alway."

Jacob there bade farewell to his children; his life-course was
run,
And his battle with manifold evil was finally done.

The faith of his life-time his spirit retained and the love
To find their fruition and joy in his heart's home above.
His soul gently went to Jehovah, that journey unknown.
At last to his sires he was gathered; his sons were alone.

TRIUMPH-SONG.

"Alleluia! Alleluia!" Loud the sweet-voiced chorus sings.
Downy pinions bear him forth
From the fading vales of earth.

"Alleluia! Alleluia!" Sweeter, nearer still it rings.
Steeped in dreams of bliss he lies,
'Mid soft, swelling symphonies
And the growing glory of the changing skies.
Restful down of wide-spread wings,
On the breeze's bosom brings
Forth the aged pilgrim toward all heavenly things.

"Alleluia!" Faces gleam amid new scenes on every hand,
Faces like those loved the most,
In the old days, loved and lost.

"Alleluia! Alleluia!" Gladly shout the singing band,
While the dear ones still draw nearer
And their aspect clearer, clearer
Is and blesses him with hopes that e'er grow dearer,
All the air about is full
Of kind, gentle, merciful
Portents promising fulfillment rapturous.

"Alleluia! Alleluia!" Song and light to splendor grow,
And a radiance surpassing
Earth's best glory sheds its blessing.
"Alleluia! Alleluia!" and his soul warms in its glow
To a keener joy than ever
He had known; a bliss forever
Greater growing as his strength grows, fading never.

He has conquered all the evil,
Conquered world, and flesh, and devil,
And the angels in ecstatic anthems revel.

“Alleluia! Alleluia!” Brighter still the glory grows,
And his wide eyes see a Presence
That embodies all the essence
Of earth-visions that upon old trials rose.
Now he sings the “Alleluia!”
Sings rejoicing, “Alleluia!”
For the Lord of all his life makes full his joy,
And he joins the happy throng
Of loved voices as along
Heaven’s highways they chant forth the triumph-song.

BURIAL-SONG.

O'er the dead, soft and low,
Ye winds of the heavens blow.
 Fall gently sweet summer rain,
 Lightly and slow.
The grave holds its captive close,
Though bitter is human loss,
And life ever has its cross
In gold or dross.

Lie silently ancient dust,
On ornaments turned to rust.
 The passing of centuries leaves
 But dust, but dust.
The tale of the patriarch old
Shall in many a home be told,
While the mummy's odorous mould
Lies still in hold.

Some day shall the cavern wall
To desolate ruin fall,
 The patriarchs march away
 At heaven's call,
While over the earth and sea,
Shall hover the mystery
Of Infinite majesty
God's own shall see.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS



HURON RIVER.

With a dash and splash and purl,
Like the laugh of a blue-eyed girl,
I leap adown the barriers brown,
Where my foaming waters swirl.

Then on in a merry rout,
Weeds and pebbles I toss about,
And glide along with murmuring song,
My gravelly bed throughout.

I pause with a deep, deep hush
And list to the whispering rush,
The sedge and weed and tall dark reed,
At whose nonsense the breezes blush.

My waters flow still and deep
Where the tangled grape-vines creep,
And reach and cling like some loving thing,
To the trees on the hillside steep.

Prattle, chatter, little stream,
Like to voices in a dream,
Soft and low, sweet and low,
Purl and flow.

Here a cotton-wood lifts his head,
Like a monarch in palace bred;
I see him toss the leafy gloss,
On his giant branches spread.

Ah, little care I for his will
Or the stern, tall oaks on the hill!
The sky I woo, I love the blue,
In my depths would the blue distill.

I'll mirror its hue in my face,
While each cloud with its fleecy grace,
Shall float and rest, here on my breast,
And its beautiful witchery trace.

I love, ah, I love the sun!
How my waters dance and run,
How they blush and gleam with the sunset beam,
When the dear, bright day is done!

Always flowing, little river,
With the willows bending ever,
Low, low, where shadows grow,
Dream and flow.

When the red glow shines no more
On sky or cloud or shore,
My face grows gray in sad dismay,
Dark and gloomy, my wavelets pour.

If the fair moon gently ride,
At her anchor above the tide,
I forget my pain and smile again.
She shall be my white, white bride.

Now and then, in sportive mood,
I hide me behind the wood,

Then out I dash, with eager splash,
With a stronger love imbued.

At last, when the moon sinks low,
And the soft, night breezes blow,
I sink to sleep on my pebbly deep.
Hushed is all my rippling flow.

Murmur, whisper, gentle brook,
In each quiet, hidden nook.
Rest and flow, hushed and low.
Sleep and flow.

Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1895.

SYMPATHY.

It falleth like the gentle rain,
Refreshing thirsty flowers again,
And sootheth like the melody
Of loving mother's lullaby.
It cheereth like the jocund ray
Of morning sun in merry May.
It warmeth like the hearth-fire glow
When the chill winds of autumn blow.
And yet 'tis better than them all.
From the heart's center doth it fall,
And cureth all our human ill,
With its soft, healing miracle.

1902.

THE PRIMAL PLEASURES.

Why fret and fume for trivial gain,
For shallow show and power's domain,
When life is crushed and worn away
By all their hollow drudgery?

There are real things we may enjoy,
Which all the nature may employ,
Free from the endless wear and strife
Which sap the strength of low-aimed life:

To think God's mighty thoughts anew,
To love His sunshine, storm and dew,
The mountain and the sky whose shades
An ever-changing grace pervades,

To know His nature's varied face
By feeling all it doth embrace,
From springing seed to flying star,
Its distance reaching, near or far.

To grow with all the things that grow
From sedge and snail to soul aglow
With endless possibilities,
Through God's unseen realities.

To give oneself to every cause
Uplifting men by faith or laws,
To hear the music, sad or sweet
O'er Life's harp swept in tones complete,

But best of all to live away
As worth the highest destiny
Planned by the thought of Love Divine
For this brief world of sense and time.
1902.

MY FRIEND.

We stand together to-day, friend,
In the present's sweet good-will.
Let us crowd the hour with joy, friend,
With love's brightness the moments fill.

For soon the hour will pass, friend,
And you will be going home.
Your face will appear no more, friend,
But as shadowy faces come.

Though a phantom face I see, friend,
Where your dear face doth smile,
Your place in my heart shall be, friend,
Kept for you in the afterwhile.
1895. Ann Arbor, Michigan.

MUSIC AND THE PEOPLE.

How they flock to hear it! Children with
The lovely bloom of early innocence
Upon their faces; lads and lassies bent
Upon gay schemes of youthful revelry;
Blithe youth and maiden with the tender mark
Of mutual love upon their faces and
The gentle tokens which proclaim to all
What they intend so calmly to conceal;
And married folk in all the dignity
Of their connubial felicity,
Whose struggling train of little ones completes
The magic circle of domestic joy.
The lonely ones are there forgetful that
Pain leaves its signet on the brow and cheek;
Despair leaps out from tempest-beaten hearts;
Or the calm forehead and the drooping mouth
Tell of a conflict past whose bleeding wounds,
Unnamed, concealed, are slowly healing still.

The music bursts upon them! All before,
The listless watching of the multitude,
Or sky or trees, or talk of common kind,
Is gone. The heart comes forth to sympathize
With song, in merriment of banquet-hall,
Or pleasure-ground or happy holiday,
Or in sweet melodies of other years
Bringing old scenes and deeds back to the mind:
The life of early youth, the home beloved,
The mother kept with all her gracious care;

The early toil and duty of the boy,
The early task and trial of the girl;
The music summons them with such sweet charm
That all their drudgery has lost its ill,
And naught unlovely stays to mar the past.

Now sounds the call to battle, or the march
Of those who go to service or to death;
Or triumph rings with its wild majesty
Or death's sad dirge in solemn tones and low,
Keeps pace with thoughts, black-garmented and slow.
Beloved ones long, long gone from hungry eyes,
Appear once more, as music brings the scenes
Of their sweet, distant presence back again:
The child that died and left a breaking heart;
The father gone when children needed most
A father's care; the thoughtful mother passed
Leaving, alas, an empty, empty home;
The lover never wed but snatched away
From lonely arms that cannot cease to ache.

The strange, sweet notes, like a magician's wand,
Bring things we long for and the things that once
Were ours; all joy the past has brought and pain
From loss of that which comes to us no more;
Duty that with its trumpet-call demands
The highest sacrifice from manly men;
Some fierce and earnest conflict, making sweat
Stand out on foreheads, veined and throbbing yet
To the stern call of earnest struggle set;
Some tone of love, the world-wide conqueror,
Which wanders in and out 'midst changing lays,

And calls the lonely from their gloomy ways,
Smiles with the smiling, gives to all the cheer,
Which the sweet tones of love alone can bear,
And with the consciousness of its broad sway
Wakens a hope of greater good for each
Beneath the mystic, magic soothing spell
Which love borne forth in music e'er must wield
O'er all who feel and bless its winsome power.

1902.

FROM CATULLUS.

Veranius, of all my friends
Chief, of three hundred thousand,
You're home again to household gods,
Dear brothers and old mother.
At home.

What blessed news to me!
Again, unharmed I'll see you,
And hear you name Iberian
Deeds, lands remote, and nations,
As you are wont. And drawing near
Your kindly head toward me,
I'll kiss your cheerful mouth again,
The mouth and, too, the eyelids.
Among all happy, blessed men,
I am most blest, most happy.

1894. Ann Arbor, Michigan.

DORN ROSCHEN.

Thorn-Rose slept a hundred years,
Till her gallant knight
Pierced the thorn-hedge, climbed the stairs
And kissed her dreams to sight.

Sleep possesses many a soul
Till some spirit knight
Wakes it with some miracle
Of service, duty, right.

Sleep no more then when the day
Dawns upon thy sight!
Waken, waken, and away
To thy realms of light!

'Tis for thee to break the spell
Of some o'er-slept hour,
Rouse some dreamer from the thrall
Of sleep's Lethe power.
1902.

TO WHITTIER.

We need thee, poet-teacher of the past,
Thou who didst dare attack the haunts of wrong,
Where wrong was strongest; thou who never cast
Meek need aside, unworthy of thy song.

There have been some like thee in every age,
Men who have held the right worth any price
Of sweating brow, of thrust from hate or rage,
Of service, succor, hardship, sacrifice.

The prophets who scourged Israel for her sins,
The daring dreamers who have measured space,
The apostles of a liberty that wins
More room and chance for every downtrod race,

These are thy comrades of the on-marching past,
And such as these will strive and bleed and die,
In grappling wrongs that have too long harassed
The world's sad patience with their misery.

To-day we need thee! Who now holds a pen
That deals such dauntless menace to our crimes?
To-day who sees with such clear acumen
The slippery ruin of these false, calm times?

Who dare uncover the foul, reeking sores
So smoothly hidden by shrewd, subtle wiles,
While danger lurks by every poor man's doors,
Enticing wrong dim love of right beguiles?

God send us poets, fearless, strong and true
To strike false priesthood to its hollow heart,
To thrust the hypocrite's soft smoothness through,
To make truth manifest in life and art!

Lips utter praises, voice the matchless words
The blessed Teacher spoke, while in the heart
An altar stands whose usage base accords
With Baal-worship, Brahmins' tainted art.

Where lawful leaders slip, the world slides down.
In school and state and commerce selfish ends
Are foremost and unholy power enthrone
In spite of lonely knights who still defend.

Rich men drag labor through life's slime and dust,
With heartless clutch on their poor fellow-men.
The thundering voice of Right shall cry, "You must!"
Some day to shaking tyrants and "Amen!"

Upon their fellows' vice, o'er, o'er again,
The vampires of the street are fed and thrive.
Who shall blaze on them righteous wrath till when
The sovereign people for their duty live?

Is our age better than the ages gone?
Is sin that ruins souls of less degree
Than sets the rack the helpless flesh upon
But leaves the spirit its high destiny?

No! Soul is more than body, life than food!
Though the soft meshes of these subtle days

Demand more skill for struggle than the rude,
Coarse, open conflicts of life's earlier ways,

Yet God's good right must win! All unafraid
Is He, though wrong in angel garb is clad.
All who are true may hope on undismayed,
And for His Day of Might be glad, be glad!
1903.

TO——.

Some men bespeak our favor for their power,
And some for learning, some for wit or skill,
And who knows what mysterious subtle dower
We pay some homage for with right good will.
But thou art not as other earthlier men
Toil may demand thy day and task thy brain;
Beneath the surface like a sweet amen,
"God's will be done!" rings on thy soul's refrain.
None can come near thee but pure virtue flows
From thy true spirit, giving grace and peace.
Thy faithfulness and truth to all disclose
God's power to bless, to give from sin release.
Mayst thou stand firm though all else fail or fall!
Be thou the pillar strong and still and grand,
Lending thy strength and shelter unto all,
Who missing thee, might fail as well to stand!
May God be with thee, give thee many souls,
To recompense thy ceaseless toil of love,
And when the far hereafter o'er us rolls,
May those who trust thee meet with thee above.
1903.

SLEEP.

Brush not lightly past my pillow
Siren of the silent night!
Thou canst hush the rocking billow
For the sleeper 'neath thy might.
Pass me not then, soft-winged spirit,
With thy peace-distilling power!
Let me feel the healing merit
Of thy presence' restful dower.
Lightly pass thy soothing fingers
O'er my temples' fevered pulse,
Where the day's wild turmoil lingers
Throbs again some stern repulse.
Let some soft mysterious unction
Heavy on my eyelids lie
Till they yield the night-tide function
Lightly veil the weary eye.
Let the hush about thy presence
Call to me eternal things;
Space and stars and God's omniscience
And the shelter of His wings;
Till upon the tides of ether
Gently glides my peace-touched soul,
And in sleep I know not whether
Sleep has even come at all.
Welcome art thou, soothing spirit!
Willingly I yield the day
With its merit and demerit.
Let the night now have its way.
1900.

OLIE'S POEM.

Rose-bush by the wall,
Roses over all,
With their crown of morning dew,
Waiting there for me, for you.

Hills of purple tint,
Where the clouds have lent
Their soft whiteness and their grace,
Clouds the breezes fan and chase.

Houses tall and fine
On the slope's decline,
Guarded by the oaks and elms
Caught away from forest realms.

Flowers fresh and sweet
Waiting now to greet
Smiling faces come to see
All their spring-time witchery.

All of these are hid
'Neath the dreamy lid
Of my Olie, wondrous wise
In fair Nature's mysteries.

1902.

A TRANSFORMATION.

But yesterday those forest trees
Stood dark and grim with arms upraised
Toward a leaden sky, a sign
Of winter's rule, of summer's death.
But as they pointed ever up
Toward heaven's spaces, they inclined
The heart to heaven-born hope, and as
Each branch and twig bore its full fruit
Of hidden hopeful leaf-buds, one
Might dream, 'midst storm and cold, of spring
And spring-time resurrection, though
The landscape lay 'neath winter's spell.

To-day it is a fairy wood,
Where oak and elm and maple stand
Beside the thick-branched dark-green pine,
All half-concealed yet half-revealed
By wreath on wreath of unstained snow.
Each limb and branch and twig and bud
Carries its load of white. Upon
The brown old earth is spread a cloak
Of eider sheltering from the wind.
A priceless garb.

Not earth alone
Is clad in robes from realms unseen;
The denisons of every land
Upon its busy surface know
The snowy garment, spotless, pure,
Descending heaven-sent from above.

For hearts all marred and black with sin,
With naked branches, pledging naught,
With leaf-buds withered, heart-sap low,
Toward their far blooming spring-time yearn,
Which waits the purifying fall
Of God's white love from hidden springs,
Before their heavenly blossomings.

Kaiserliche Botanische Garten.

Poppelsdorf bei Bonn a. Rhein. 1897.

PLANTING.

God is life's first planter.

With mighty arm He sows broadcast the seed,
O'er sloping woodlands, fallow field and mead,
Dropping in clefts of rock-ribbed mountains, germs
That find their height of life, their being's terms.

He who breaks the furrow,

He who hollows with his hand the earth
And therein plants what later finds its birth
In herb or tree, has caught the thought of God,
And followed planting where His feet have trod.

Man's best day of labor,

The field or meadow, first fruit of his skill,
Is far outrivaled on the wildest hill
On island, foreland, untrod plain or height,
For who that strives can approach the Infinite?

Yet follow, Nature-lover,

And plant with skillful hand and kindly care
Thinking that God's rich largesse everywhere
Has spread the flying, wandering, scattering seed
Unto new life and fruitfulness to lead.

1902.

TO THE ROCKIES.

Let me feel your rugged sides,
Ye rock-ribbed mountains! Let me pull
Some loose stone out and look beneath,
To find the secret of your strength,
Or blindly fingering, slowly read
Your hidden tale of birth and growth.
Yes, let me stretch my arms their length
Across your bosom, so to feel
The great throb of your beating heart,
And fathom, if I may, the spell
Which ever draws me back again
To look upon you, love and praise,
With interest which ne'er grows old.

The pines climb up to reach your heights
Like soldiers who must scale the slope
And rout some stubborn foe beyond
The sky-line of your summits; brave
To bear alike with summer's sun
Or winter's cold or tempest's sweep
That beats the very breath to naught
And smothers life beneath the power
And raging fury of its blast.

Here grows a stalk of golden-rod
Drooping its head for lack of damp
Of springs, which your forbidding sides
Hold back to-day from things athirst.
The sumac lifts its ruddy pike,

Alone or with its graceful kind,
Waiting the rough kiss of the frost
To make its leaves glow red as blood,
Beside the gay stream rippling on
And dashing wildly o'er the rocks
Below your lofty masses.

Ye guard the stream who gave it birth,
Beneficent parents, centuries old,
Lifting your giant heads unmoved
By all the changes of the earth.
Ye stand unconquered by the shocks
Of stormy ages. Men may rise
And pass like phantoms of the night,
And nations follow the lead of fate
In life and death.

Ye are to-day
Still young as youth; ye hold the power
To change the destinies of states
And make the nations quake and cower.
1903.

THE SMELL OF THE HAY.

The sun shone hot on the street to-day,
From a wain the wind brought the smell of the hay,
The meadow-sweet smell of the hay.
Memory's wingéd feet brought the scenes
Amid which the busy reaper gleans,

 In the radiant meadows of hay
Where he hears the grass-hopper's creaking wing.
 As timothy is softly blown
By breezes idly whispering,

 And, cool or scorching, sweeping down
The odorous fields of hay.

The stately stalks fall like the rain
Beneath the sickle's ruthless reign,

 In the scented fields of hay.
The clouds dull, fleeting shadows cast
And the cotton-woods give shade and rest

 By meadows of new-mown hay;
While in the great, red barn the breeze
 Sweeps the passage, cool and sweet,
And stirring the high-topped maple trees,
It speeds away on errands fleet
 To the prodigal meadows of hay.

The swallows flit the eaves about,
And chattering wildly flee in rout

 From the coming loads of hay
That shake the heavy oaken floor
And fill the passage full and more

With the stifling weight of hay.
Aloft the great fork bears the loads
 To fill the caverns, ton on ton,
And make them ready for long inroads
 Of Winter, the gaunt and hungry one.

The sickle's noise in the ripened field,
The wide rake gathering the yield
 Of scented new-mown hay
The swaying loaded wain, the call
To service which lays hold of all
 Upon the fields of hay
Join to one mighty melody
 Of cheerful toil's long recompense
Beneath the hot sun's majesty
 Where life is earnest, strong, intense
In the rich fields of hay.

Upon the wide, wide meadows still
The summers work their miracle
 On tons of ripening hay,
While brilliant weed and buzzing bee
Disturb the calm monotony
 Of the fruitful fields of hay.
Far cities wait upon the good
 Stored in the great red barns away,
And all the land claims brotherhood
 With those that harvest in the hay,
The rich life-giving hay.
1902.

THE DENVER UNIVERSITY.

Thou Pallas of the western plain,
Regal in ruling thy domain,
Prepare thy virgin festival,
Calling thy maids to carnival.

Thou was not born, full-armed and grown
At once thy power making known.
The decades of thy past have seen
Thy slow increase, the years between.

Strong men have suffered for thy sake,
Brave women borne the still heart-ache,
And sacrifice of life and gold
Upon thine altar has been told.

The temples which to thee are reared
By sturdy toil and sweat appeared.
Those who did service at thy shrine
Gave freely store-house, field and mine,

Till now thy temples, grand and free
Add splendor to the west to-be,
And thou art gloriously enthroned,
Goddess of western wisdom crowned.

Thine owl and olive-branch declare
Men may in peace all knowledge share;
Thine aegis and thy helmet's crest
Promise protection, freedom, rest.

Now let the pure-faced virgin line
Pay tribute to thy power sublime,
Bring the new peplum to adorn
Thee, with resplendent wisdom worn.

Let horsemen of the western plain
For thee, o'er noble steeds draw rein,
And thoughtful men in homage vie
For all thy past efficiency.

Let the great city of the plain
Pay tribute to thy useful reign,
And pass the baser pleasures by,
To honor thy supremacy.

In thy right hand the future lies,
Potent with unseen destinies.
May full-horned Plenty spend her store
For thine advancement, o'er and o'er.

May wealth of spirit rule through thee
Material prosperity,
And thou in high ideals increase,
With progress in their train and peace.

Then from thy temples shall go forth
Men to bring virtue to the earth,
And women wise in truth and right
Guarding the good's increasing might.

Some western Socrates may rise
From thy pure shrine whence error flies,

Some Solon to adjust our laws
And free them from persistent flaws,

Some Sappho to delight the ear
With her sweet song's melodious cheer,
Some Pindar with the eagle's eye
Flying to face the sun on high.

But give us, Pallas of the west,
Of all thy gifts the choicest, best,
The characters which shall endure
The fire of life, untarnished, pure.

He in whose name thou dost extend
Thy sway for learning's noblest end,
Endow thee with increasing good
In truth and faith and brotherhood.
1902.

LABOR DAY.

The tasks of many-handed toil
Lie idly in the work-shops while
The workers let the stretching spring
Of long endeavor loosened fly.
The forges bear no hammer-blows,
The lathes no outlined patterns carve,
The seething of the smelting-pot
Is still; no furnace blazing white
Compels the grimy laborer
To flee for shelter; whirring mills
Grind out no grists of nutrient grain.
Lapsed is the earnest, arduous toil
That shapes the engine or the loom;
That hurries through the busy streets,
Bearing its weight with shoulders bent;
Or stands behind the counter where
The tiresome yard is stretched its length;
Or bows perplexed before the desk,
Adding the puzzling figures o'er.
Toil will not shove the saw nor plane
Nor hoe nor rake nor plow to-day,
For this is Labor's holiday.
"Let loose my bands and let me go!"
The toiler cries in rebel tones,
And flings his fetters roughly down.
Homeward he speeds with heart aglow,
Wide open to all homely joys.
Then grasping in his sturdy arms
The treasures hoarded safe at home

He bears them with him in high glee
To share in Labor's revelry.
On the full street he takes his stand
To join in pomp and pageantry
That promenade for him to-day.
Or, heedless of such dignity,
He hurries forth to seek the wood,
The field, the plain so long unseen,
The mountain with the untrammelled cloud,
Which, toiling not, decks heaven's blue.
With those he loves he hastes afar
To glean the joy each moment sheds
Upon this day of festival.
While he is free from task and care
He must find freedom's sign somewhere
To bear away for future days,
A precious charm and talisman
Against toil's endless monotone.
He hastens on but swifter still,
Journeys the chariot of the day,
Riding too soon amid the glow
That gilds the western sky with hope,
Giving good pledges for the morn:
Saying that toil is man's true sphere,
His happiest inheritance
From the All-seeing Providence,
Who also toils from dawn to dark,
Forever on with joy to be
The Worker of eternity.

1902.

FREEDOM.

Come with me beyond the crowded town
Where houses strive together and forego
Earth's ample gifts of air and sunshine sweet,
Where nature's held or loosed by heartless rule
Is trim or careless, graceful or uncouth
By man's ungracious limits and decrees.

Come forth and let thine eyes, long barred and caged
Once roam at their free will from plain to plain,
And o'er the cloud-strewn meadows of the sky,
From one horizon to the other's bound;
Travel o'er mountains' serrate, purple length,
Rough, rocky ridges and long, barren slopes,
Snow-caps that vie with the unsullied clouds,
Their tinted grace of changing slope and height
Not stolen, marred, or kept for many a day
By vexing, unrelenting city walls.

Speed o'er the plain with all the eye's swift speed,
And in unwonted liberty of sight,
Revel, while gathering to thy starving soul
The splendid colors of the outspread wood,
The lonely glory of the convent wall,
The shimmering ripple of the far-off stream.

Breathe the ambrosial air that satisfies
After long, long privation, then, at will,
Let thy chained voice send forth its far outcry
To farthest blue-tipped mountain; still thy lip

Moves but in fancy, being so caste-bound,
By harsh, unwritten codes of city law.

The fields are free from man's precise control
The idling stream goes wandering where it will,
And willows nod above it gracefully.
Nature's wild carelessness is beautiful,
And true in spirit to art's high decrees,
The maddest color-mixture on the hill
Is full of subtly-changing harmony.

Let God's wide nature in; grow fat and full,
With the great splendor of the earth and sky,
Before some duty not to be gainsaid
Lays its strong hand upon thee, binds thee fast,
And leads thee back within thy prison-walls.

1902.

THE DEAD WIFE.

The long, long years have come and gone
Since she was hid from me,
By the coffin-lid and the black earth strown
On her grave's mystery.

She is gone, long gone,
And my heart is still alone.
She is gone, long gone!
Still my heart makes bitter moan.

Last night I seemed to feel the touch
Of her hand upon my brow.
Silent I lay, nor dared so much
As breathe one long love's vow.

She is gone, forever gone,
And the days are long for me.
I am lonely and alone.
Life passes mournfully.

She seemed to stand beside my chair
As lost in revery,
I sat among my volumes, where
She ever loved to be.

But she is gone, is gone,
And all the years between,
My life has been so lone,
So needing the unseen.

I wander oft in memory
The paths we loved to tread,
And share again the sympathy
And sweetness of the dead.

Oh loved and lost to me,
Why dost thou not return?
The years hold naught for me
Like thee, for whom I yearn.

The faces that have come and gone,
Have loved and passed from me,
Have left me sadder, more alone,
For none were equal thee.

Thou best-beloved art gone
To some bright, happy clime,
To bring to all thine own
A fairer grace sometime.

And so I wait with spirit hushed
And heart as still as sad
The meeting full of blessing crushed
To make the long years glad.

I shall come, yes, shall come,
Some sunny, happy day,
To meet thee in our heavenly home,
Bride of my heart away.

1902.

JUNE.

Ah! June, fair June!

What sky is so blue as thine?

When every bird's in tune,

And every bird-note's mine,

All mine!

How rich, warm, sweet,

Is the glow of the golden sun,

As it falls on field and street,

And where winding rivers run.

My sun!

They rise, stretch, reach,

To spaces of dazzling blue,

My strong-armed, green trees reach

To the region where all is true.

My trees!

My June, sun, trees!

And yet they are all, all yours!

They are everyone's who sees

And receives God's grand out-doors.

All ours!

1896. Terre Haute, Indiana.

A VIEW SKYWARD.

Skyward! The sluggish waters reek
In noisome filth beneath our feet.
Harsh jangling evil sounds bespeak
Haunts that for wicked deeds are meet.

All ways are narrow, vulgar, poor,
The air is foul and vile the street.
Our sad eyes shun the evil-doer,
The flaunting sinner whom we meet.

Skyward! An inward voice cries out
For some spot, free from taint and shame,
Which low-souled men have spread about,
Which are of high-souled men the blame.

And still that inward cry persists,
With hope to find a God-blest space.
"Skyward!" the heaven-born soul insists,
With longing for its native place.

Skyward! Instinctively we turn
Our hungry eyes to fields of blue,
Through whose pure spaces burn and burn
The sun's rays, dazzling, radiant, true.

Like white caps flung upon a sea,
Without them calm as summer's day,
The soft clouds spread their feathery
Translucent folds in pure array.

Skyward! Though dark may be the view
Of sin-stained life about our feet,
Above, toward the unmeasured blue,
Is pledge of purity complete.

No soul but like the lily may
From stagnant depths grow soul-tints white,
By looking up toward the day,
By rising up toward the light.
Chicago, 1895.

NOVEMBER.

From German Prose.

In garb of dull and leaden gray,
Is ushered in each somber day,
December brings good Christmas cheer,
No bright hope lights November sere.

The bare woods chilled by raging storms
Their last leaves yield in vague alarms.
Their happy song-birds have obeyed
The southward call, of cold afraid.

Where once their chirping nestlings grew
Dwell harsh-toned northern guests. And who
That smells the autumn odor shed,
From mists that everywhere are spread

Feels not at once the dying breath
Which reeks with fading Nature's death.
All odors, sights and sounds combine
To emphasize the year's decline.

Still to the oak's unbending bough
The stout leaf clings though wild winds blow.
It opens late to mild spring airs,
And late the storms of autumn dares.

Although the pine woods ever hold
Their mantle green in warmth or cold,
'Midst these chill blasts and wintry days
Their dark tints suit the heaven's grays.

Poppelsdorf, 1896.

THE BIRDS.

Sing a song for the birds as on light wing they fly
From the haunts of the winter away;
For their coming, their wooing, their merry outcry,
For their joy in the rollicking May.

There is love in the homes that they build by the way,
In the hedge, in the wood, in the lane,
Where the willow bends low with the water to play,
Or the cotton-wood shines in the rain.

There is joy in their carols that rise with the dawn,
In their calls and their twitterings sweet.
There are households that grow about meadow and
lawn
With a language men cannot repeat.

With the growth of a wing and an unsteady flight,
There are homes that are empty and lone,
For the young ones have wandered through shadow
or light
Into cares and endeavors unknown.

For the lessons of life without splendor or show,
Of toiling and loving and song,
For the peace and the happiness they may not know
That they render us; sing a glad song!
1903.

FRIENDSHIP.

Friendship! Angels must draw gently near
To see its birth-morn with admiring eyes.
Its subtle fragrance scents the atmosphere.
Its purity must fall from Paradise.
Who is not glad when friends walk down the street
To see each token of the endearing tie,
To know the passing of that presence sweet,
That knits two souls in kindred sympathy.
When some fresh dawn is red with prescient joy,
And all the tokens of the day foretell
That a new friend has risen to enjoy
The soul's long desert spaces; then 'tis well.
The feast is spread; who has not longed to share
The hidden realms to thought and fancy given,
The Elysian fields of memory to lay bare,
The dear ideal, the far but imminent heaven?
With all the poured-out riches of the years
Is spent the present wealth of sense and thought,
Until a friendship's banquet-hall appears
Decked with all precious treasures life has bought.
Who would dare darken friendship's gracious feast
Must have within a traitorous heart indeed,
For broken faith will sever host and guest,
And scatter withering ruin's want and need.
Better to hear the clods drop, sad and slow,
Above some loved one whose true soul is free,
Than wake some day no more to fear but know
Thy heart's beloved is untrue to thee.

For some day, somewhere, 'neath some sunny sky,
Hand will clasp hand and eyes with love will glow
If love be noble; before treachery
The future halts for hope faith must bestow.
1903.

TO ELEANOR.

Eleanor, beloved beyond all common measure,
Whose soul is so tuned to all noble things and true!
Be thou forever my soul's peculiar treasure!
Come at my summons, let us commune anew.

The phantom land of fiction we'll wander in together,
And paint for our fancy the scenes that ne'er have
been.
We'll read stirring poems of struggle and endeavor,
Or join in some service, some sacrifice for men.

Eleanor, beloved, there is no aspiration
That rouses my spirit but thou dost feel it too.
No deep consecration, no helpful meditation,
But thou with thy kin-soul dost render all more true.

Then come let us wander in realms of thought together.
With courage we'll gird us for days of sun and rain.
Though life and its duties our hearts attuned may
sever,
We'll cheer one another in pleasure and in pain.
1903.

THE MORNING CAROL.

Down drops the dawn from eastern skies,
Routing the dark in dull surprise,
Pushing the mists from vale and plain,
Laying its hand on field and lane.
Sleeping, the old earth stirs and sighs,
Rubbing the languor from its eyes,
For a vital force is in the dawn
Rousing the life it rests upon.

Hark to the first soft, fluttering note,
Trilled by some half-roused finch's throat!
Quickly there join, with song on song,
Jubilantly, a grateful throng,
Just in the hush of the early dawn,
Welcoming all it shines upon.

'Tis but the prelude to the day;
Flitting the sweet choir slips away,
Leaving a wandering, fickle song
Flung from an idler in the throng.
Then come the cock's far clarion call,
The low of cattle and the fall
Of resonant hoofs and rattling wheels,
Following duty's hurrying heels,
The shriek of an engine, a rolling wain,
The song of a robin, the call for rain
Of dark kildeer the pigeon's cry,
Swelling the morning melody.

Where at the dawn the dim light shone
Edging the curtain closely drawn,
Radiantly gleams the golden ray
Ushering in another day.

1902.

"THERE'S AN ANGEL IN THE STONE."

This is heart-marble that life carves to soul,
Discolored here and broken there, but still
A Parian whiteness gleams from it at times,
More dazzling than Carrara's sculptors carve.
With the life-chisel, years the Sculptor toils,
Moulding the shape with patience infinite.

No matter with what care He guards the stone,
A mischief vagrant mars it, o'er and o'er,
With cunning which destroys the precious work.

The soul's love, he whose eye has caught
The Sculptor's vision, waits with saddened heart,
Failing to see the figure of his dream,
The spirit beautiful released from stain,
A regnant power in an achieved domain.
"Tis there within," the watching lover cries,
And sometimes weeps and sometimes smiles with joy,
But ever waits and prays the Sculptor's hand
May bring at last the soul's fine outlines forth,
So touched with heavenly purity and strength
That angels will bow humbly at the sight
And say, "It is enough; the lover's eyes saw right."

1906.

THE PRESAGE OF WINTER.

The sun has faded from the sky.
The Summer's pageant has passed by
And state of Autumn's sunny days
With wanton color's witcheries.

The spreading canopy of cloud
Covers the heavens like a shroud,
While the chill north-wind whistles wild,
Supplanting zephyrs soft and mild,
That paid their homage to the sway
Of Summer's gentle majesty.

Pull down the window, close the door!
The furnace' gloomy depths explore,
And where the chill and shadow lay
Let the red furnace blazes play!
When warmth and cheer the home pervade,
And Winter's heralds barred, dismayed,
Still shriek without; enjoy the glow
Of painted Summer's mimic show.

Outside the storm-clouds thicker lower,
While the poor beasts in shelter cower,
And birds that brave the Winter's cold,
Seek from it a protecting fold.
Down pours the rain in driven sheet,
The last leaves bearing in retreat,
Foretelling winter-bearing snow
That over hills and fields will blow.

When the fierce forces of the cold
In gathering cohorts on have rolled,
The white flakes fall in zigzag flight,
Advance-guards of the boreal might;
They sweep like scouting parties on
O'er palsied wood and dying lawn.
Away they hasten, swift to bear
Their tale of death to Winter's lair.
Yet soon with gathered force, the snow
Returns, commissioned to bestow
The hoary Winter's chill embrace
Upon warm earth's unwilling face.

The night that shakes with cold and storm
Withdraws before the spotless morn,
For all earth's varied splendid show
Is covered with unsullied snow.
The field, fresh-sown with springing grain,
Wears a white cover without stain.
The seeds that scattered far and wide
The coming of the Spring abide,
The acorn, walnut, hickory lie
'Neath eider cover hopefully.
All changeful Nature rests awhile
Beneath the gentle, sheltering pile;
And men who toiled through Summer's heat
In hope rich harvest days to greet,
Give hearty welcome to the sway
Of each renewing winter day,
Knowing that all the earth will sing
For this a sweeter song in spring.
All the wild sweep of winters past

Seems bodied in the Arctic blast,
While thoughts of restful seasons gone
Add peace to calm hours coming on.

Existence seeking vast repose
Finds all its need for all its throes.
The heart that without ceasing beats
Rests stroke by stroke, from its swift heats.
Not one of living things but knows
For labor's losses, sweet repose.
To day the night succeeds, the sun
Follows the storm, the dark the dawn.
We climb the mountain to descend
Where plain and valley gently blend.
The fleet race of the mountain stream
Is eased where lower levels gleam.
The sunset's golden splendor fades
With evening's slowly gathering shades.
The waterfall seems e'er to flow,
But once the water sinks below,
Or rests before it comes again
To seek the stream, the plunge, the plain.
And we who toil to reach the height
Of thought, of life, of heaven's light,
Descend to common tasks and cares,
And so are rested unawares.

Let Winter send its freezing blast
Upon the wrecks of summers past,
Sweeping the mountain and the plain,
Till they are bare of growth again.
Let workers revel in the peace

And rest that come from toil's release.
For all the varying changing tides
Of being gain good that abides
In rise and fall, in death and life,
In warmth and cold, in peace and strife,
In work and rest, in sun and shade,
In bloom and fading, root and seed,
In sleeping, waking, day and night,
In past and future, good and ill;
For all things form the crucible
In which is purified the soul
From scattered fragments to a whole,
By puzzling mysteries' potency
For an unknown eternity.

1903.

DUSK.

A fading western gleam,
A waxing gray above,
A feeling that the eye
Is growing dim; work dropped
From listless hands; the ear
Intent upon street sounds,
That clash in melody
Half discord. 'Mid the shades
That darken, fall the tones
Of children's voices, loud
In merry play; the roll
Of loaded wagon drawn
To night's dull storage; tired
Slow steps of workmen turned
Toward home and rest. At last
Is hushed the loud shrill sound
Of busy tools. Lights gleam
From curtains drawn where shone
Home's varied secrets. Then
A star appears to speak
The night's first message, while
A quiet hush descends
On all the world. Day's work
Is done, is done. 'Tis night.
1896. Terre Haute, Indiana.

I'VE JUST GOT HOME.

You sit here in your cozy nook at home.
You look upon your books and pictures in
Their pleasant framing, with half-dreaming eyes
That gazing on some far mirage behold
Another vision and perplexed, you say:

"Dear home? Yes, home is dear! A fitting place
From which to reach forth and bring in the best
The generous world affords; a center for
All noble impulses, designs and plans;
But not enough is here to satisfy
The soul's whole need. All life has grace and good."

Such is your thought? But have you ever been
Outside, and felt the sudden nameless pang
Of closing home's large friendly door behind
Your wandering feet, with dear home folk shut in?
Or worse, has your clear sky e'er turned to gray,
Some sad day when those making home-walls dear
Were dead and gone? When every household god
Was sadly sold or packed away from view
Of strangers' eyes, while you in dumb dismay
Were sent forth pilotless in the rough world
Outside the door, and weeping bitterly,
You stretched out groping arms to the unknown?
There has not? Then you cannot understand,
Why I love home so; why there's not a spot
Within its portals but I love to sit
Safe sheltered in long luxury of delight

At the sweet precious comfort of my home,
And why from morn till night in my glad ears
There sounds the sweet refrain, "Home, home, sweet
home!"

For long, bare years I had no place called home.
My mother died when I was but a child.
My father gave me to the ungracious care
Of a stern aunt who never missed the whole
Performance of her duty in her way.
She knew not, never having found the art
Of love's display and love's sweet kindnesses.
I learned life so, and when I went to fit
My eager mind for service by skilled means,
The large ideal that possessed me was
To enter life's great work-shops and perform
Hard, earnest labor.

No dim thought of home
Had lodged within my fancy. Nearly gone
Or overlaid were memory's early pictures.
With eager, girlish pride and zeal I took
Upon my shoulders the stern toil of life.

True I was not alone for where I lodged
Were others sharing in home's counterfeit.
With these I talked and at the common board
Ate bread and salt and all that might insure
Guest-friendship. Each was fit by face and voice
To be a comrade, but there failed behind
The faces kindred souls; when my light thought
Sped forth to tilt with others, search was vain
For comradeship of mind; from day to day,

For six long years I went through life alone,
My pathway thronged by those who seemed to be
The friendliest men and women, but on test,
Possessed no grounds of mutual happiness.

When Love came at last and boldly knocked
Upon the moss-grown door-way of my heart,
Could any wonder that I let Love in?
When home was given and dear companionship,
Was't not enough to make true woman's heart
Leap high and bound with an unfailing joy?
I think so; you'll agree with me, my friend,
That one who's traveled so far on lonely ways
Is rich and blessed to be at last at home.

1896. Terre Haute, Ind.

STRANDED.

It idly rocks in the rippling wave,
The vessel old,
The sparkling waters its worn sides lave,
'Neath musty hold.
Earth, moss and slime from the river's edge,
Have hid from view on the shelving ledge
Its half-sunk keel,
Dead leaves and weeds and withered sedge
Its deck conceal.

It reaches out to the stormy blast
A tattered sail,
That droops when the wild storm is past
Without avail;
Not all the strength of a steady wind
In creaking canvas can unbind
The shattered prow.
'Tis held by a force untamed, unkind,
About, below.

'Twas once a craft of high degree.
It sailed in pride,
And bore its loads from stream to sea,
O'er waters wide.
It proudly dashed from its shining prow
The curling waves; and to and fro,
Scorning delay,
In steady service gaily, I trow,
It went its way.

But now it rocks with the rising tide,
 Its service o'er.
It leans to the river-bed its side,
 By wind-swept shore.
With the rise and fall of the lapping wave,
Return the past, the actions brave,
 Without recall.
For it let memory's favor save
 Regret's dark pall.

Oh, gloomy shade of a vessel, past
 Thy days of prime!
Thy dismal visage can but recast
 Life's own decline.
How many souls have proudly sailed
O'er seas of life while strength availed,
 With heart of joy,
Then having struck and stranded, wailed,
 Without employ.

Life's sea has lessons cheering, true;
 Our crafts are not
All furnished by the tasks we do.
 No earthly lot
Brings man to his most fruitful hour,
Nor manifests the soul's true dower
 In deeds alone.
In simple being the greatest power
 Is often shown.
1896. Terre Haute, Indiana.

TO ORLEANA'S EYES.

Sad, sweet eyes!

They look from the face of a maid I love.

They look in a puzzled way,
As seeking to fathom a world above,
And a strange world here, to-day.

Sad, sweet eyes!

They mirror the sky with its azure hue,

While the hair with its sunset gleam,
Would enrapture the heart of a lover true,
With its beautiful, golden sheen.

Sad, sweet eyes!

They speak of a life brave, deep and strong,

A life that has battled well,
That has suffered much in strife with wrong,
But never in conflict fell.

Sad, sweet eyes!

Oh sad, oh sweet and sweeter sad.

Whatever the sorrow drear,
The leaven of love has made life glad
And sanctified each tear.

1895.

OCTOBER RAIN.

Winds from the western sky
Storm-clouds are whirling by.
Fiercely the rain-drops beat
On the deserted street.

Clutched in the fierce wind's grasp
Leaves still with longing clasp
Cling to the maple-bough
Radiant with golden glow,

Till marked with baneful blight,
Whirling in trembling flight,
Other brown leaves they meet,
Down on the dismal street.

Shadow and cloud and cold
Drear days of autumn hold,
Bearing in sad array
Summer's last signs away.

Only the naked bough,
Only the earth below
Are left to keep the cheer
And promise of the year.

Now let the hearth-fire gleam,
With its warm glowing beam!
Gray sky and chilling sleet
Make household life more sweet.

1895. Terre Haute, Indiana.

IN SOLITUDE.

In solitude!

Not now to tread
The busy maze of the bustling street
Or keep the time of speeding feet.
Not now!

Not now to feel

The tender clasp of friendly hands
Cherished but left in other lands,
Not now!
To speak the thoughts that glow and fade,
Wakened by those from kin-soul strayed,
That answered, gleam with warmer shade,
Not now!

In solitude!

And what is left
To one who busily trod the ways
Of active toil in other days?
No ill!
The babbling river that dashed and gleamed,
In sunshine's glow like silver streamed,
May fill
Its shaded bed 'neath bending trees,
And find repose while restful breeze
Fans its smooth breast until one sees
The thrill
Of stronger life.

A life enriched by hush and shade
As sparkling on, it skirts the glade.
To men
It carries on its broadened breast,
Health and refreshment from its rest;
And when

The soul that seemed
Quite cast aside from work and life
Has found once more its rush and strife,
'Tis then
It brings a hidden sweetness forth,
Which found its deepest, richest worth
In solitude.

1895. Terre Haute, Indiana.

COLUMBINES.

Columbines, snow-white, sky-blue,
With the gold at heart, are you
Conscious of surroundings rude,
Far from mountain solitude?

Here the throng 'mid dust and heat,
Jostle through the busy street,
Surge and circle round your bloom,
Leave you scarcely breathing-room.

From your presence breathes the power
Of the mountain, cloud and flower,
Pine-trees singing in the wind,
Ferns and mosses, crag unclimbed.

Though in this poor place you bloom,
You await a better home,
With sweet service done unto
Those who love such flowers as you.

Often noblest souls are met,
In uncouth surroundings set,
From their native soil apart,
Losing their sweet native art.

But some hidden future lends
Meaning great to present ends.
'Tis for it they came to be
In such alien company.

Denver Market, 1902.

UNREST.

The seed of discontent finds fallow ground
In the unrestful spirit of the day,
While men unite some better law to found,
Some law their rulers must themselves obey.

In groups, in companies, in throngs, in hosts,
They marshall from the ranks of daily toil,
To win for labor, whatsoe'er it costs,
Some right before of capital the spoil.

These bloodless struggles of our modern age
Are fraught with dark, deep danger to the state
Men's passions are not still; they boil and rage
And threaten some great ruin soon or late.

The hands unoccupied with usual task,
The minds set free to question and complain,
The homes where hungry children ask and ask
For what no union can give back again,

The empty hours for idle deeds set free
Are full of peril to the accustomed life,
For through new, untried spectacles, men see
Strange phantom good, in hate, rebellion, strife.

Forces without each other impotent
Contend against the yoke that makes them one.
Estrangement, alienation, discontent
Disdain the hopeful good that might be done.

There is a law that could forever break
The deadly all-destructive power of strife.
It only will be able to awake
A mutual purpose for our common life.

A law so large that all the universe
May move in harmony at its behest.
A law so kind, not one man would have worse
Than his best good, however dear his quest.

To it may many-handed labor bow.
To it may wealth and power their homage pay,
For the great law of Love will teach men how
To find the best for all in God's best way.

What is the best? Is it some toy of sense,
Which a few passing years will take away?
Not so; a wise omniscient Providence
Through love would wake men's souls to grow
alway.

Not in self-seeking, ye who seek your own,
Will the great future bring to wealth and toil
Its real blessing; but in ways unknown
Love and love only will the maze uncoil.

Some day the puzzling blindness on mens' eyes
Will pass and they will find at hand the key,
That will unlock a hidden Paradise
Of altruism for humanity.
Trades-Union Strike, 1903.

SING A LITTLE.

Sing a little! Sing a little!

Life is full of toil and care.

Find some note to send above thee,

Ringling gladly through the air.

Do not let the weary burdens

Of to-morrow weigh thee down;

E'en to-day's will have their guerdons

Of attainment and renown.

Sing a little! Sing a little!

Life has other use than toil.

Let no earth-born aspiration

All thy spirit's uplift spoil.

Let no bondage of the present

Rob thee of thy heritage;

Right to love, to think and nascent

Life to give its tutelage.

Sing a little! Sing a little!

Lift thine eyes to skies afar!

See the golden glow of sunrise,

Gentle gleam of evening star!

Only thus canst thou discover

All the best for thee and thine;

And Life's majesty uncover

From the rubbish of our time.

Sing a little! Sing a little!

And while singing call to song
All the dull-eared souls about thee,
Blindly stumbling life along.

Let an orchestra of music

All about thy treble rise
And thy singing be the rubric
Guiding ever toward the skies.
1901.

THE ROBIN.

He that loves a robin's note
At the early dawn of day,
Finds the spring-time in his throat
With its merry roundelay.

When the winter's strength doth wane,
With his power and favor too,
Shaking snow-drifts from his mane;
Robin comes the spring to woo.

Let the March wind fiercely rage;
Robin hides and waits the day
When the sun for him shall wage
War against the tempest's sway.

Robin loves the sun and shower
Gentle with the breath of spring.
His sweet carols greet the hour
When the day is opening.

Robin loves a sunny home
With the shade-trees all around,
Where the laughing children come
Listening for each spring-time sound.

No recluse from haunts of men
Hiding where no eye may see.
All his store he spreads for them;
Song and home-nest in the tree.

He that loves a robin's note,
Happiest of men is he,
With the spring-time in his heart,
Tuned to all its melody.
1902.

SLEEP AND FAITH.

Cast down by toil's long weary day,
Sleep gently rests and renders new
The broken strength till morning's ray
Meets powers alert to plan and do.

Cast down with fret and care and pain
Faith soothes the soul with heavenly ease
Until renewed it finds again
Fresh-kindled power and strength and peace.

Skilled weaver of the torn soul-woof
Best helper to life's deeper calm,
Faith brings its inwrought heavenly proof
Of healing power in its subtle balm.

The soul's restorer after pain
And loss and anguish and defeat,
It sends the healed one forth again
Life's opening ways with cheer to greet.

APRIL.

Give me thy secret, sweet maid of the spring,
Boldly to sun and spring breezes to fling.
Long hast thou hid it from beasts and from men.
How dost thou come to thy power again?

Winter thou findest ensconced in the hills,
Freezing the heart of the forests and rills.
Shrieking, thou send'st him o'er mountain and plain,
Leaving him naught but the north-land, the main.

Yet thou art gentle, fair April, and kind,
Stepping so softly adown the south-wind,
Knocking so lightly at Nature's cold heart,
Rousing so noiselessly with gentle art.

Yesterday over the fields there was death.
Life had not drawn one slow, fluttering breath.
Now there is waking, activity, life,
Everything stirring in emulous strife,

Streamlets and leaflets and flowerets were still,
Waiting till thou shouldst thy mission fulfill.
Whispering news of the sun on the plain,
Seeking to grow up and blossom again.

Seeds that are cast in the garden or field,
Waken for thee, and their tender growth yield.
Life is a workshop and Nature must toil,
Forming Spring's garb from inanimate soil.

Miracles multiply these April days,
Wonders are wrought in mysterious ways.
In what new fining-pots, crucibles rare
Art thou distilling the earth and the air?

With what strange chemicals dost thou empower
Bud for the leaf-shape and leaf for the flower,
Out of the self-same identical soil
Giving us grain and the fruits for our toil?

Thou art a mystery, April so fair,
Gentle and sweet, with the flowers in thy hair.
Only the Guide of the universe knows
Whence thou hast brought all thy bounty bestows.
1902.

TO-DAY.

To-day is but half of to-day.
The other half is past.
It gleams with the light of days
Whose glory will ever last.

To-day is but half of to-day.
'Tis yesterday, or the time,
When life was so full, or gay,
Or bitter, sad, sublime.

To-day is but half of to-day.
Some days are two-thirds filled
With a time that never was, a way
Whose promise is unfulfilled.

To-day is but half of to-day.
To-day is oft but a dream,
Wherein we pause and delay,
Where we do not live but seem.

To-day is but half of to-day.
But where is that real, real time,
Past or future, whiche'er it be,
Which makes to-day sublime?
1896. Terre Haute, Indiana.

THE WOODBINE.

Woodbine clinging to the wall,
Rich with autumn splendor,
Humble cot and manor-hall
To thy grace surrender.

In the night a silent hand
Laid its weight upon thee,
Cold caress with stern command
Joined in death to crown thee.

To the touch thou dost reply
Like a queen resplendent
Garbed to grace the victory
Of her reign transcendent.

Gold and green and purple glow,
Crimson, wine and umber,
Harmony in brilliant show,
Contrasts without number.

All thy graces of the spring,
Summer's lavish splendor
Fade before the ravishing
Show of thy surrender.

Life like clinging vine is crowned
In its autumn season,
Finds its richest treasures bound
With age's ripened reason.
1902.

SONG.

Song's dead!

She lies beneath the rubbish heap
Of low ideal and selfish aim,
Trampled beneath the cruel feet
Of those who strive their ends to gain.

Song's dead!

Cast down by many a heartless blow
From those who use her garlanding
On hollow form and empty show,
Her highest ends ne'er honoring.

Song's dead!

Is dead indeed? Poor world unsung,
Poor human sorrow lacking speech!
Sad anguish without voice or tongue,
Love, hope and joy unuttered each!

* * * * *

Oh Song, arise!

No weight of sin can keep thee down.
Thou art immortal like thy source,
A guest of heavenly renown.
Use for life's need thy last resource!

Oh Song, burst forth!

In spite of fetters, scars and stains,
Disdaining insult, loss and wrong,
Uplift again thy heaven-born strains!
Give us the inmost life of song!

1903.

TO MAECENAS.

Horace, Book I; Ode I.

Maecenas, heir of noble ancestors,
My fostering genius and my genial charm!
It pleases some to catch Olympic dust,
In racing, to avoid with grazing wheels
The bounding posts and gain the noble palm.
It raises to the gods the ruling race,
This, if the throng of fickle citizens
Asserts that triple honors he shall bear,
That, if he hides in proper granary
What has been brought from Libyan threshing-floors.
Who stirs ancestral acres with the hoe
Rejoicing, with no gift can you persuade
To cut the Aegean with a Cyprian craft,
As timid sailor. And the merchant scared
At south wind beating the Icarian waves
Praises the quiet leisure of his town;
But all untrained to suffer poverty,
Must soon construct again his shaken craft.
There's he who scorns not ancient Massic bowl,
Nor taking portions of the business day
To stretch his limbs beneath arbutus green,
Or by the sacred waters' gentle fount.
To some the camps give pleasure and the sound
Of trumpet, mixed with lituus, and wars
By mothers hated. 'Neath the frigid skies,
The hunter, careless of his youthful wife,
Delays on seeing hind with faithful young,
Or Marsyan boar, burst through the smooth rope-nets.

The ivy, prize of learned foreheads, joins
Me with the gods above; the cooling grove
And airy choir of nymphs with satyrs joined
Seclude me from the throng; though Euterpe
Withdraw no trumpets; nor Polyhymnia
Avoid the gift of lyre from Lesbia;
But if you join me with the lyric seers,
I'll strike against the stars with lofty head.
1902.

THE HAUNT OF THE FERN.

For "The Household."

I grew beside a rippling brook,
Where spread the water-lilies,
In a sequestered sylvan nock,
Among the purple trillias.

The rocks by ancient Cyclops piled,
Reared their gray heads above me.
The dryad of the forest wild,
Light-footed, paused to love me.

I listened to the wind's light song,
Or saw the checkered gleaming
That fell my spreading fronds among
From the far sunbeams streaming.

I nestled in my leafy bed,
When clouds above me lowered,
And drank the cool refreshment shed
By rain-drops softly showered.

I love the tall elm's splendid height,
The calmness of the maple,
The oak's leaves, shining in the light,
The grape-vine's twining cable.

I love the silence of the wood,
Broken by forest voices
That answered to the solitude,
Where kindred life rejoices;

The chirping of the cricket, or
The bee's soft lazy droning,
The grasshopper, complaining o'er
His checkered life, the moaning

Of some neglected quail or grouse,
The dragon-fly's swift speeding,
The anxious squeaking of the mouse,
The lamb's far distant pleading;

Or sudden trill of robin's song,
Upon the stillness breaking,
Or thrush or blackbird, hid among
The willows gently shaking.

The forest silence, full of calm,
Of falling peace and blessing,
Adds to the forest breezes' balm
Its spirit all-possessing.

The speaking stillness of the wood
Is steeped in meditation.
The subtle voice of solitude
Calls to no vain oblation.

Wood-lover, I, beside the stream
Raised humble fronds toward heaven.
I will not speak abroad the theme
By Nature's true heart given.

Her mate am I; I loved and passed
From forest-wilds forever,

To bring my charm to men harassed
By life's untold endeavor.
1903.

HAUNTED.

The silent stars shone o'er the place
Where the haunted mansion rose.
The trees' bare branches felt the grace
Of the still night's repose.

From the bright radiance of the west
A star shot and was gone;
A bell struck; from his hidden nest
An owl made outcry lone.

There was the sound of running feet
Along a highway, and a shout
To tense ears wild and full of heat;
The wind soughed suddenly about.

From the dark, haunted house there fell
A muffled rustling sound;
The swish of garments and the spell
In unseen presence found.

A door creaked on its hinges and
A loosened window fell,
Touched by an unseen, specter hand,
Like spent stone in a dell.

Through the long hall a solemn tread

Passed mournfully and slow.
An Indian maid, the legend said
Kept tryst of long ago.

Here in the wild and savage days
When tribal conflicts raged,
Her lover of a hostile race
To win her, war had waged.

The night he vowed to bear her home
From the lone prairie knoll,
Her kinsmen for the brave had come,
And at his loss, her soul

Had loosed its bands of sanity
And fled to happier days
Where through life's long inanity
She journeyed love's sweet ways.

Year after year she slipped away,
To wait in virgin grace
The keeping of her bridal day,
The welcome of his face.

Though death at last her soul set free,
She still came as before,
A spirit, 'neath the stars to see
Him who would come no more.

Not homes of men nor city's din
Rattle of team nor train
Could keep her soul from lingering in

The tryst-place on the plain.

So when some wanderer of the night
A sigh hears or a call,
Or sees some figure in the light
Of moonbeam on the wall,

Or hears the soft, slow tread of feet,
Or door closed, or a moan
That carries heart-break, or the sweet
Low harmony of tone,

The olden tale is true, he knows;
The Indian maiden keeps
Her vigil while in deep repose
Her lover ever sleeps.
1903.

THE POP-CORN FAIRY.

She was born one splendid summer day
When the sunbeams kissed the corn,
And greedily drank the rain away,
Left in its leaves at morn.

Her face was hid from sun and rain,
Noon heat and midnight chill.
She slept, she dreamed and slept again,
And grew in vigor still.

She gently rocked before the breeze,
Or bowed before the blast.
Her pillowed head with careless ease
On its soft cushion cast.

She knew when life had reached its prime.
She felt the frost's fierce hand
Striking the green of summer-time
With his multi-colored wand.

She suffered from the shock that broke
Her couch and cover loose,
Her silken pillow gone, she woke,
Trembling at such abuse.

She heard strange news one autumn day
As she lay beside the fire,
Of fairy garb all white and gay
Thenceforth her heart's desire.

She saw her comrades shake and leap
Before the fierce fire's heat,
And all their snowy splendor reap
In the furnace she dared meet.

Her day of fate arrived at last,
She suffered, burned and shook.
She burst her husk and gladly passed
From the dull robe she forsook.

Strange were the changes that she met,
The pink with clinging stain
That made her white gown whiter yet,
The needle's thrust of pain.

The dark pine where she hung aloft,
The Christmas candles' glow,
The Christmas carol, clear and soft,
The gifts in splendid show.

Beyond the splendor, doom! She saw
Each showy comrade slip
Within a red and fearful jaw,
Behind a ruthless lip.

She also met the cruel fate
Of pop-corn fairies all;
She the wild appetite must sate
Of a giant, fierce and tall.
1902.

LITTLE RED SHOES.

Two little red shoes has our little lad,
 Knit shoes with a band of white.
With these two little pink feet are clad,
 O'er the stockings warm and bright.

The stockings hold for they are fast,
 But the little red shoes are free,
When the little bow-knots their fetters cast,
 At the little pink toes' decree.

So wherever our little lad has been
 We are always sure to find
One little red shoe and perhaps its kin
 The other red shoe behind.

Too soon the little pink toes will bid
 The little red shoes good-by.
They must be in a safer shelter hid,
 For life's sterner days draw nigh.

Sometimes these little red shoes will be
 Only relics of childhood days,
While the little pink feet stride bold and free
 Along this world's highways.

One earnest wish for these little pink feet,
 One great wish I must record;
'Tis to see them running, firm and fleet,
 In the service of the Lord.
1896. Bonn, Germany.

THE LOST TARA BROOCH.

Among the pebbles, like a pearl astray,
Or like a star, slipped from its place in play.
Far from forgotten hall and robe of state,
Thy former splendor who may now relate?

Thy gilded traceries the tempests beat.
The crested wave becomes thy gemmed retreat,
With briny breath for perfume, stones below
To rest upon, white bronze and golden glow.

How many days has summer sunshine shed,
Or showered rain upon thy jeweled head?
How many winters seen thee left alone,
Where the gulls shriek and wind-swept billows moan?

Some careless robber let thy carven state
Fall long ago, the keen-eyed search to wait;
Or Dane or Scot or Roman; who can tell
What day of carnage with thy passing fell?

The day that saw thee borne from Tara's halls
Saw long-armed ruin seize on Tara's walls;
Her king enslaved by some fierce sea-blown thane,
Marauder in his long peace-crowned domain.

No more on Tara's hill her ruler stands,
Wide-gazing on his laughing, blooming lands;
No more dost thou in lofty service clasp
His ruddy, royal velvet in thy grasp.

When the brave bard of some old cromlech tells,
Or Tara's harp with minstrel music swells,
The phantom revelry is not for thee,
Cast ruthless, by the cold, unthinking sea.
1904.

CHRISTMAS.

Among the days is one
With holly in her hair,
And snow-wreaths on her dress.
Her hands are full of gifts so fair,
Her heart of tenderness.
I like her best of all the year,
Sweet Christmas-day with love and cheer
For all beneath the sun.
1902.

MORNING.

Good-morrow world!
Yesterday has slipped, like leaf from tree,
Or wave from shore, spent burden from my back.
Its rude rebuffs, its crowns are not for me.
Good-morrow, world!
Smile or be harsh, I do not fear the day.
One walks beside me, full of power and love.
Give me my task, I would be on the way.
Bide, little room, till I come back again.
Breathe forth some perfume that will soothe me then.
1903.

DRIFT-WOOD IN THE MISSISSIPPI.

'Twas the ghost of a tree that spoke to me,
In the mist of the silent night,
Enwrapped in visionless revery,
From a haunt with gray woods dight.

His voice was dull as the monotone
Of a priest in chanting prayer,
And hollow as the death-bell's moan,
And sad as fall night air.

He spoke and I saw there, rank on rank,
The logs in the river rise,
As if in fancy to spur and flank
A forest for dead men's eyes.

The call of the heron and curlew's note,
The trill of the mocking-bird,
Rose far and dull as from stifling throat,
With all senses dull and blurred.

A moon that was grizzled and gray and pale
And a cloud neither mist nor sky,
O'er the phantom forest seemed to sail
And into the night to die.

From the heart of the ghostly forest rose
A moaning that swelled and sank,
A wail for old losses and pains and woes,
O'ercoming it, rank on rank.

The breath of morning stole from the east,
And down on the river's breast
Sank the forest monarchs sore diseased
To the flowing stream and rest.

To rise some day in stalwart youth,
To stand in the forest green,
To shadow the earth with their wide-flung booth,
Sweet with song-birds, shy, unseen.

And I who heard the ghostly tale,
Who had seen the monarchs fall,
I knew that the new life must prevail
O'er death's dark, gloomy pall.

I bethought me of my promised dawn
After death's dark night of tears,
The heavenly scenes I shall gaze upon
After the flood of years.

And the pregnant grace of those happy glades
Where the Tree of Life's abloom
Enlivened the present's somber shades,
With the Light of Life's long noon.
1904.

THOUGHT-WINGS.

Strange things are thought-wings,

Fleet as a ray of light,

Nay fleeter far

For they reach the star

That is far beyond the sight,

And are back again

To the dusty plain,

Swift as a keen delight.

Soft things are thought-wings,

Soft as the crimson cloud,

Where the soul may lie

In revery,

While languorous dreams enshroud;

Or like the charm

Of a mother's arm,

With naught of ill allowed.

Bright things are thought-wings,

Bright as a prism-ray,

Shining athwart

The busy mart,

Challenging shadow's sway,

And sparkling too

As thought will do,

With crystal radiant play.

Stern things are thought-wings,

Stern as is law and just,

With balance fine,
For life's design,
 Stern as a soldier's trust,
Where duty leads
And force proceeds
 With firm, unyielding thrust.

Sad things are thought-wings,
 Drooping with taint of sin,
Heavy with pain
From scar and stain,
 Where wrong has entered in
And marred with crime
The soul sublime,
 The spring of life within.

Fierce things are thought-wings,
 Fierce as a vulture's beak
To rend and tear
With wild despair
 Who gaping vices seek.
Shame's nameless stain
And gnawing pain
 Defile their victim's cheek.

Free things are thought-wings,
 Free as the eagle's breast.
On strong brave will
There waiteth still
 The fleet thought seeking rest;
The good and true
The lofty too

Bear men to the Isles of the Blest.

Pure things are thought-wings

Pure as the white gull's crown,

For him who dares

The rarer airs

Where the pure heaven slips down.

Who will arise

To undimmed skies

Heeds not earth's heavy frown.

1904.

WE HAVE ONLY DAYS.

When the sun sent his first beams in splendor
Along earth's dark ways,
He made no unstinted surrender,
He gave us but days.

Life spreads charming vistas before us,
And unexplored ways;
Our choices are weighty since for us
There are only days.

All knowledge, thought, friendship, affection,
All pleasure and praise,
All toil, all Life's bitter correction
Are pressed into days.

The soul's ever-growing expansion
Must find room and place
If ever, in daily expression,
For life has but days.

The days that are gone tell our mission,
Each past one betrays
Our life's inmost hidden decision
For these fleeting days.

Too many are wasted forever;
The spent sigh conveys
The truth that lamenting can never
Restore the lost days.

Rare gems in our life's silver setting,
Bright jewels that raise
Its value, through purpose befitting,
Are well-treasured days.

They slip from Time's casket and vanish.
Good use gives them grace.
Their treasury naught can replenish.
We have only days.
1904.

MY HOUSE.

I built me a house, a little one.

Forth from its oaken floor

Swept the rolling plain

With the mountain-chain

Framed by the open door.

Grass gave my feet

A carpet sweet,

By the lake with shell-strewn shore.

I built me a house, a little one,

With windows wide and light;

Beyond, the trees

By gentle breeze

Were swayed to deep delight;

Blithe birds of song,

Swift-winged and strong

Passed by me in their flight.

I built me a house, a little one.

Its roof was small and low.

Above the sky

Made a canopy,

With cloud-ships moored below,

And star-gems set

In ground of jet,

And moon-bow dipping low.

I built me a house, a little one.

Within was sweet content.

Life gave fine art

To head and heart,
For being's betterment,
And space to learn,
To love and yearn
For all life's best intent.

I built me a house, a little one,
But friends could find the door
And sit with me
In company.

What mansion gives us more?
A mystic tie
Binds all who try
My roof-tree, more and more.

BRITISH POEMS.



IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

With light and reverent footfall
The noiseless Abbey door
We pass. The bustling city
Is heard and seen no more.
Its busy wildering motion
Its noisy winding streets
Are gone. A benediction
Our weary spirits greets.
We hear the voice of worship,
The whisper, "God is near."
The changing bustling throng slip
Away; and peace is here.

'NEATH GOTHIC ARCH.

The blending shades of mellow brown combine
With the warm tints of yellows, reds and blues,
From brightly glowing windows to refine
Crude sense to comprehend gay color's use.
We feel the artist's unifying grace,
In varying shades and tints of color's scale
Which softly blending or contrasting, trace
Outlines of beauty inexpressible.
Hues are the outward attributes of form.
The shape determines the most potent charm
That art can wield. The Abbey walls perform
The will of shapely grace and hostile taste disarm.
Joined at the base a pillared throng upsprings,
Each column girt by groups of slender shafts,

Together bound by rows of shapely rings
In those grave capitals which art engrafts
On Gothic columns. Shaft from shaft springs forth
To pointed arch, to groined roof, or rise
Still skyward like the thoughts that gave them birth.
A nascent longing swift toward heaven flies;
There rise high thoughts of God and noble life,
'Tis easy here to lose the sensual taste,
The human kinship with the world of strife
In uplift pure and meditation chaste.

The spaces of the Abbey floor are wide,
With low-roofed aisles in transept and in nave.
The sight is hemmed as springing shafts divide
And in each higher reach, the highest crave.
The impulse upward grows as if beside
Some mounting angel rose and the darkness clave.
There falls a flood of light from glass unstained
To break the gloom of trefoil gallery arch,
And beam in its pure splendor on the malmed
And halt below who peace and healing search.
So 'midst the gloom of our unseeing time,
From upper realms pours down the light of truth.
It calls our spirits toward the heavenly clime
And fills our hearts with the warm hope of youth.
Dim, dreamy beauty brought from bygone age!
Thou mayst from empty aims our warm hearts
wean
To nobler aspirations and to wage
Persistent warfare with the low and mean.

WHERE HEROES REST.

The life we live upon this little space
Which men call earth is but a fleeting span.
Tribes, races, generations leave their trace
And pay their tribute to the life of man.
Each adds his little to the common good.
Each lives his life and passes from the stage
Of bustling action; feels perchance he would,
If able, more the general ill assuage.
The little deeds of common lives are soon
Enveloped by the mists of Lethe's stream.
None but the great and noble win the boon
A while to linger 'neath kind memory's beam.
Here in this silent temple of the dead
Time counts for naught; space is made valueless;
Who in far regions for his country bled,
Sleeps by the peaceful saviour in distress,
Beside the statesman, poet, mistress of the stage,
If not in body, in the thoughts of men.
Here is his life's memorial; here the page
Where all his deeds of might are writ again.
Not only victors by the sword or pen,
The varied hosts whose deeds have won a crown,
Bear here their long renown. For other men
And women, royal, by a line come down
From kings and sons of kings, is found a place
Of peaceful shelter and of last repose.
Here gods of war find no abiding-place.
Here cares of state their final power lose.

Temple of greatness!
Behold the dead
Laid in thy crypts aside,
Immortal made!
All Life's completeness
Have they attained,
Whether on ocean wide
Honor they gained,
Or in the regions
Where England rules,
Trained in her wide domain,
In conquest's schools,
Or in the fields of thought
Gathering flowers,
That to mankind have brought
Sweets for long hours.

King of the legions
Of heavenly grace!
These are Thy regions,
Here is Thy place!

THE NORTH TRANSEPT.

These walls are lined with emblems of the dead
Breathed on by spirit's force that o'er us breaks
When the clear light by sculptor's genius shed
Rough, unhewn stone to life and feeling wakes.
Around us are the symbols of the great,
While 'neath our feet repose their earthly shred
Of mortal being.

Here with common fate

Lie Chatham, sire and son, Fox, Canning, dead,
And with them, Castlereagh and Wilberforce;
Friend of the slave, the last. He sought to mate
Himself with freedom; wooed her long perforce,
Through manhood's vigorous years, with varying
fate.

He would breathe air, for all free as for him,
And stifled by the slave-pen's poisonous breath,
He fought and struggled through life's pathways dim,
For free, free air to all and slavery's death.
At last when sounded from the realms divine
The summons to depart, he heard as well
That he had won the victory sublime;
For England's slaves release from bondage fell.
This final triumph crowned his struggling life
With everlasting honors. Long before
Had England hailed him saviour; rumor rife
The title swiftly sped to far-off shore:
America's extended realms bespoke
Just recognition of his noble cause.
Then far and wide across her plains awoke
A purer love for freedom and her laws.
Man vied with man in strife to free the slave,
And after struggling years they broke the chains.
No longer could the lash men's souls deprave,
Within the broad Republic's free domains.
"America is free!" the warriors cried.
The wounded living by the fallen's side.
To England's hero as to theirs was brought
Their homage for brave deed and noble thought.

THE NAVE.

There is a dreamy spell about these aisles
Which holds one like the clasp of unseen hand.
The eye sees many a name unknown, beguiles
The passing hour by contrast of the grand
Productions of Roubiliac with the stern
And solemn faces of the earlier days
Of the old Abbey's fame; yes, learns to turn
With friendlier glance toward Art's simpler phase;
For calmly, gravely simple though it be,
Its chaste severity turns more the heart
To the last tragedy; the destiny
Of these and all men. It suggests the part
Held by this sacred pile: a temple where
Man with his chain of finitudes aspires
To join himself with God by humble prayer
And praise, and meekly teachable, desires
Through simple faith to know the Infinite.
The varied pomp of worldly circumstance
Drives not the clouds and darkness forth. The light
Of truth steals gently in; its unbarred glance
Is clearest. Silently it comes to men
Full oft in sun-kissed, solitary glade
Or in the cot of pine in sheltered glen,
And sends its sharpest lances to the goal
Where pomp and form do not pen up the soul.

The Abbey floor is laid with slabs. The shade
With mingled light from warm-hued windows falls
On names we read with inspiration. Here

Are three laid side by side whom Science calls
Her greatest; life-wise Darwin, Herschell, seer
Of skies, and Newton whose attentive ear
Heard the sweet music which the stars enthralls:

“Not to myself alone
Swing I while years roll on,
In my long orbit on.”

Sang the old earth.
Nobody heard the song;
Nobody dreamed how strong
The ties which held it 'mong
Worlds of twin birth.

“Not to myself alone
Fall I where waters moan
Here by the sea-side lone.”

The rain-drop sighed.
Nobody marked its fall,
Nobody knew the thrall
Of still force over all
Deep-set and wide;

Till once a thoughtful man
Rested where breezes ran
Their riots in the span
Of apple-boughs.
An apple fell. It seemed
To scatter rays that beamed
To space's ends, where gleamed
Vast unknown laws.

His ear was roused to hear
The call of sphere to sphere,
Which their long girders rear,
All space to bind.
The loving harmony
That reigns eternally,
'Twas Newton's gift to see
For all mankind.

THE CLOISTERS.

Thought-weary from the visions of the past
And faces of the dead on every side,
We leave the Abbey aisles and lose the last
Faint broken echoes of the world outside.
The hazy sunlight gently glides among
The low groined arches of the cloister square,
A dim and faded image of its strong
And usual self. We breathe the ancient air
Of a departed life, forgotten age.
Seated awhile besides a crumbling arch,
Worn by such suns and winds as vent their rage
On man's creations, dream we of the march
Of bygone monks upon the mourning-stones
Beneath our feet. The names inscribed thereon
Are dimmed by wearing foot-steps. Script disowns
Its half-lost duty. Bit by bit we con
The old words of esteem upon the walls
To other dead. The Gothic aisles compel
Our eyes to linger on them and there falls
Upon our spirits all the sacred spell
Of hours of silent meditation, blent

With the soft, simple, prayerful melodies
Once to the ancient cloister service lent.
We fancy monkish dress and rhapsodies
Of deep devotion on each upturned face,
In worship of a mediaeval age,
Whose winging thought would cast aside the trace
Of sinful earth, or with it warfare wage.

THE POET'S CORNER.

There is a corner in the Abbey's walls
Loved by all men where learning is revered,
Because so many memories it recalls
Of those who Wisdom's temples have upreaped
And Art's and Poetry's. Historians speak
Here once again from lips of living power
Carved in the silent stone. The poet's cheek
Is instinct with its olden heaven-sent dower
Of inspiration.

Thacheray appears

With thoughtful visage as if still involved
In social questions. Johnson's forehead wears
Its old-time learned look as if were solved
All weighty problems touching use of words.
By Handel's monument we hear the strains
Of the Messiah and the solemn chords
In keeping with its sadly sweet refrains.
Goldsmith and Thompson wield their former spell
Of quiet charming. Burns with handsome face
And broken life may winsome numbers tell
Next to great Shakespeare in his towering place
'Mid England's poets. Coleridge, untaught

In the stern ways of steady industry
Draws near to Campbell with his gracious thought.
Gray mates with Spencer. Butler seems to try
To jostly rare Ben Jonson. Chaucer holds
His place with well of English undefiled
Close by the marble slab 'neath which there moulds
The dust of Tennyson, the latest child
Of England's poet-fame. Beside it lies
The mortal cloak by Robert Browning left
When his immortal spirit sought the skies.
Near Dryden, Cowley's name its charm has left.
One gentle face looks forth upon the throngs
Of British author-heroes, not akin
By nation. He across the sea belongs
Where England's daughter sought a realm to win
And rule in freedom. His the sunny lays
Of untaught Indian and Acadian lass;
The gentle melody which care allays
By its soft soothing. Poet of the mass
Was he. The common people hold him dear
Because his spirit felt the urgent needs
Which to the common man in daily life appear.
He scattered in our untilled earth the seeds
Of high and helpful thoughts and fancies pure.
How oft his cry "Excelsior!" has rung
In every round of life its clarion cure
For lazy indolence and careless wrong!
The heart-beat quickens at the sight of him,
Our poet Longfellow so far from home;
The eyes from springing thoughts grow strangely dim,
With joy that he to his long right has come.
1897.

THE TRAITORS' GATE.

Tower of London.

There sounds the dip of a muffled oar
Slowly approaching the silent shore;
On rusty hinges creaks the door
Of the cruel traitors' gate.

With steady feet and e'er watchful eye
The guards with their captive are passing by,
From the Thames where boats at their moorings lie
To the dreary traitors' gate.

The gate creaks to with a sullen moan
Foreboding fear and a fate unknown,
Weighted with woe for the captive lone
By the deadly traitors' gate.

From fame and station have many gone
This way to a gloom no sun shone on,
Or to an ill-starred death beyond
The gruesome traitors' gate.

For More, for Anne Boleyn as well,
And Katherine Howard came the knell
Of death—beyond the changeless spell
Of the direful traitors' gate.

Lady Jane Grey with her tender heart,
Doing her duty with simple art,
With her best-loved played the martyr's part

Near the treacherous traitors' gate.

For Essex, pride of the Virgin queen
Here fate destroyed fair fortune's sheen,
Elizabeth too found prison mean
By the stolid traitors' gate.

Departed now is its day of power,
Rusty guard of the crumbling Tower,
It idly stands by the river shore,
The mouldering traitors' gate.
1897.

THE PARSON'S DAUGHTER.

From the National Gallery.
She's the parson's witching daughter
With a touch of earthly clay
Making all the good about her
Wield a sweetly human sway.
Her roguish eyes
From summer skies
Their deep azure hue have taken.
'Neath silken fringe
Their heavenly tinge
Seems by dreamy visions shaken.
Her gay wealth of curling tresses
Frames a pensive oval face.
Many a piquant line confesses
Mischief's half-upwelling grace.
Her arched brows
Form Cupid's bows

Which her ruby mouth surpasses.
Her neck's soft grace
Finds sheltered place
'Neath her mantle's light caresses.

She's the parson's 'witching daughter
And her face is fresh and fair,
But the thoughts within have brought her
More of honor, love and care.
1897.

THE OLD TEMERAIRE. TURNER.

From the National Gallery.
She slips along through the silent sea,
Its wide waves cutting sluggishly;
Behind her gleams the path she made
A fading line in evening's shade.

A phantom vessel with ghostly masts
And cross-bars bent by fearful blasts,
A hull much-scarred by cannon balls,
Worn, warped and strained her wave-washed walls,

No sails to spread; a faded flag
Floats where the steady hawsers drag
Bearing the useless craft away
To final port 'mid waters gray.

She stands illumed by ghostly light
Her hulk half-garbed in funeral white.
The shadows cold of evening gray

Grow long upon her gloomy way.

Beyond her hull the sunset glow
Has made the western heavens grow
To brilliant seas of burning red
Where the low sun its glory spread.

They fade above to gold and green
With fields of cloudless sky between,
Of azure-blue that meets the shade
By creeping glooms of evening made.

Their splendor lights the solemn gray
That follows on the vessel's way.
They too with fading glow foretell
The end of all things here as well.

For her no last salute is fired;
No martial guard sees her retired
From Britain's fleet to a dismal fate.
No measured strains with her passing mate.

In Trafalgar's far deadly fight
She fought beside the fated knight
Who victory-crowned passed forth, away
To the bright realms of endless day.

Her fame is wide upon the wave!
She earned the glory victory gave.
Now with times of service past
She is borne to her destined rest.

Soon shall fire and the moth consume
Her broken hull in its last tomb.
Soon she'll pass forever more
From rolling sea and silent shore.
1897.

MUSIC IN ST. PAUL'S.

Music's gently stealing
From an unseen choir,
Murmuring, rolling, pealing,
Like a heaven-struck lyre.
With an earnest intonation,
An ecstatic palpitation,
It conveys
Through the dim cathedral's spaces
To the sacred Name it graces
Hymns of praise.
Harps resound and bells are ringing,
Trumpets call and birds are singing.
Then a hush
Steals across the organ,
Slips adown the aisles,
'Midst the pillars winding
Care-worn hearts beguiles,
Soft refrain
Calls forth heavenly meditations,
Musing on Life's deep relations.
Then a paeon
Flung across the music's stillness,
Startling, shows us heaven's fullness and domain.
Hail to the Chief Who rules on high!

Hail to the King! Hear angels cry!
And the echoes answer loudly,
Through the aisles and chancel proudly,
High! High! High!

Hail! Let Him every foe defy!
Round the tombs of those departed,
England's heroes, loyal-hearted,

Lingering notes

Fall as if revering
Those so dear to fame,
Who, no foeman fearing
Fell in England's name.

Hear the choir-boys sing the anthem!
How my heart joys as it hears them.

Melody his wings providing
Bids thought mount all ill deriding;

Nor destroys
All the weight of earth-born sighings
These delights of heavenward flyings.

Now the notes
From the organ stealing
Fade and die away,
To our souls revealing
Duty's call to-day.

So from high-born acclamations,
And sublime imaginations
Sinks the soul
To the level plain of duty
With its homeliness, its beauty,
And is whole
For another struggle

And another day,
With the good and evil
Both to meet alway.
1897.

ENGLISH GLADES.

The growing shades of evening fall
On scenes of rustic beauty,
The farm-house with its garden small,
A source of pleasant duty.

Besides it stand in close array
The tiny stacks of yellow
Provided 'gainst a needy day,
And trees with fruitage mellow.

The walls of stone and roof of slate
Protect a rambling cottage
Whose owners there in thrift await
Two foes, Old Time and dotage.

It slips away from watching eyes
A sloping woodland leaving,
And low ravine, where Nature sighs,
In unseen beauty grieving.

A manor-house succeeds the wood,
Whose hawthorne-hedge grows trimly
Beside a drive of many a rood
Where rides its owner grimly,

Thinking of fair lands far away,
Of love to him forbidden,
Of his proud mother's haughty sway
She who his love has chidden.

Its shapely trees and lawns precise
Soon slip beyond the vision,
And distant graceful scenes entice
The heart with views Elysian.

There 'midst its clump of forest-trees,
The village church-spire rises,
Or looks aloft from lonely leas,
Free from life's mixed disguises.

Its ancient records hold the clue
To many a tangled story.
Its mossy grave-stones treasure, too,
Tales of a time-grown hoary.

By rolling meadows, fields of grain
'Gainst hawthorne-hedges growing,
By forest-trees which dot the plain,
Their graceful shade bestowing.

And then across the rippling stream,
Or through the valley's winding,
We pass to catch the sunset gleam
Where day's its cares unbinding.

Between these sylvan shades there lies
The life of many a city,

Where human need in struggle sighs
And want and woe we pity.

Sweet sylvan shades of England! Let
The city's life and splendor
Soon fade from view! We linger yet
'Midst charms no art could lend her.

Here England's poets found their source
Of lofty inspiration.
Here found their noble thoughts the course
Of quiet meditation.

No other land beneath the skies
Has left a richer treasure
Of poet lore from harps that rise
To strains of purer measure.

The land is rich that gave them birth,
The world of thought revealing.
Its quiet slopes contain a worth
Which mind from sense is stealing.

1897.

ON THE NORTH SEA COAST.

There's a rolling,
A wild pouring
Of gray waves on the shore.
They break on the ruddy brown rocks and fling out
White showers of spray to the bluffs standing out
'Twixt land and sea.

In long furrows
Where there burrows
The bright prow of the ship,
The ocean-waves steadily sweep to the land,
And bury themselves in the eddying sand
'Twixt land and sea.

There's a rumbling,
A swift crumbling
And the rocks fall away.
The meadow-land lying besides the wild shore
Feels the onslaught of ocean and hears its fierce
 roar,
'Twixt land and sea.

There the billow
Makes a pillow
For the white gull's soft breast;
But a desert's the sea with its eddying spray.
Its voyagers haste to their havens away,
'Twixt land and sea.

From the sun's light
Glowing showers light
The wild wastes of the sea;
And fall like a message from heaven's clear dome,
On the cottage which makes for the shore-man a
 home
'Twixt land and sea.

So its rays fall
And heaven's rains fall

On the evil and good.
The just and the unjust life's blessings attain,
The line that divides not unlike the domain
 'Twixt land and sea.

1897.

THE MEETING OF THE CLANS.

The mists that hid erstwhile Ben Lomond's crest
Departed as the sun sank toward the west,
And left the sky whose meads of azure blue
Were checkered thick with flowers of golden hue—
The stars. Like gems they gleamed that autumn
 night.

Though bright their rays they paled beside the light
Of torches far below. The torches flashed
From slope to slope, from crag to crag, and dashed
The highest hill-tops with a lurid flame,
A beckoning call from which wild echoes came,
Crying, "Ahoy! Convoke the clans, the clans!"
The summons crossed the vale for on Ben A'an's
Dark crags and slopes the lurid signal gleamed
A far reply. Achray's and Katrine's sands
Heard the weird call, "Convoke the clans, the clans!"

The torches blazed and paled. The sward below
Grew dark with many a figure 'mid the dew.
Low voices sounded on the evening air;
Words council-weighted followed half-breathed prayer.
Upon the ear in muffled tones they broke
Which scarce the partridge in the glade awoke.
Great hopes for growing good to be achieved,

Dark thoughts of tardy wrong to be relieved;
Deep plans within brave hearts were wisely wrought
To heat for deeds like iron with blows red-hot.
Then as the watchful cock foretold the dawn
Each daring clansman set his armor on,
And like a specter of the night withdrew.
The night lay vacant on the empty sward,
Its tenants gone to action and reward
Or loss. No portent of their deeds of might
Remained to haunt the silence of the night.

1897

BEN LOMOND.

Loch Lomond's waves are flecked with foam.
A fierce wind sweeps its sapphire plains.
Swift-winged and still the sea-gulls roam,
White pennants flung to winds and rains.

The land of rain and mist is hid
By dragging storm-clouds, from the sun
Which bathes the hills, prohibited
From touching the dark valley's gloom.

Here stands Ben Lomond; here his base
Is fathoms deep in Lomond's waves.
His sides and crest with fleeting grace
Are hid by mist-wreaths, cliffs and caves.

He has withdrawn; the eager eye
Seeks to invade the mist in vain;
But fancy flings the curtain by

And lifts him to his state again:

Broad is his base; with rocks washed bare
Around which grow the reed and sedge,
And in dark hollows fern-leaves rare,
Wild grasses on each jutting ledge.

Above rise warmly-glowing trees
By bright-hued Autumn richly dressed,
Their yearly fading and decease
With dreams of splendor sweetly blest.

The holly's shining thick-leaved green
Defies the cold, yet flames to red
As if its berries' lambent sheen
Had been by furnace blazes fed.

The high tree, holly, mistletoe,
The hawthorn-berry, heather-bell,
The bracken and the broom bestow
Their lavish grace on bluff and dell.

Still higher towers Ben Lomond's crest,
Rough-hewn by blasts of countless years,
Which storm nor sunshine, calm, unrest,
Nor heat nor cold nor seasons fears.

All the wild tempests on him beat,
All the rough winds of heaven blow!
The mighty mountain stands replete
In strength that ages long bestow.

TO UNKNOWN SHORES.

Into the dark and night
Our steam-steed speeds along,
Bearing us forth away from sight
Of the land of our native tongue.

into a world untried
We step from the stable earth
To the rocking vessel's sunken side,
In doubt of its changing worth.

Into a sea unknown
We ride on the rolling wave
Like wandering waifs, adrift, alone,
Where the ruthless billows rave.

Into God's care we sail
Afar from the surging strand.
His gracious shelter will not fail
On ocean or on land.

1897

WESTWARD.

We are riding into the west,
With the speed of a steam-winged steed,
Plunging and lunging across the vale,
Curving and swerving around the dale,
The storm-winds dash on him rain and hail.
He deigns not to give them heed.

We are riding into the west.

The sun is a golden glow,
Radiating its warming light
Into the gloom of the stormy night,
Promising morning, home, delight;
Bidding forebodings go.

We are riding into the west.

How many long days ago
Did our vapor-panting, armored steed
Turn from fair Venice his brazen head,
Shake from his feet the waves she wed
In the troth of long ago?

We are riding into the west.

What matter to count the days?
Not the number of days we spend
Counts so much in the final end
Of earthly things to which we wend
Our several lingering ways.

We are riding into the west.

We have passed the snowy crests
Of Alp on Alp and seen the haze
Of violet Garda; in amaze
Have stood among the pillared ways
Where the Dome of Milan rests.

We are riding into the west.

And the dragging mists are gone,
Veiling in half-hid romance
Rhenish castle, knight and lance

Shielding many a mill and manse
Where Belgium's waters moan.

We are riding into the west,
And our steam-steed never tires,
Though the ocean-billows beat
Hard and long beneath his feet,
Though they shake the very seat
Of his ardent being's fires.

We are riding into the west.
My heart is glad to see
The miles roll back along the way
Leading home. No tongue can say
A word so dear on earth to-day
As home. America for me!
Enroute in New York. 1897.

RELIGIOUS POEMS.



GRATITUDE.

For my youth's untroubled pleasures,
For the priceless treasure-store,
Poured from home's unstinted measures
In the forming-days of yore;
I thank Thee.

For the God-given higher willing
All the best to dare and do,
Where'er Thou life richly filling
With Thy power didst endure;
I thank Thee.

In the wilderness' long journey,
For the lessons that I learned;
Choice and action growing slowly
Toward the good that I discerned;
I thank Thee.

For Thy gift of consecration
Which has lifted me above
All life's paltry dissipation
To the splendor of Thy love;
I thank Thee.

Most of all that Thou hast saved me,
Kept in safety all the way,
Beyond all earth's joys hast shown me
Thy resplendent majesty.
I thank Thee.

THE ALABASTER BOX.

Where is thine alabaster box, my friend?
Is't hidden still away,
Waiting in uselessness some future end
On trivial pleasure's way?

Or dost thou bring it forth on gala days
Its perfume to exhale,
Gracing thy feasts and festivals so gay,
With fragrance in its trail?

Yet shut away from sight of common eye,
To common use unknown,
Never by any chance the property
Or good of common men.

Bring forth that precious treasure from its shelf!
Hide it no more away
In avaricious jealousy for self
And selfish pride, I pray!

It may be small, but howe'er small it be
Its choicest worth is lost,
Till it be spent on noble cause by thee,
All countless of the cost.

Break it for Him who multiplied the loaves
By blessed Galilee,
And thou wilt wonder at the treasure-troves
Spent lavishly for thee.

Break thy rich box for all our human need,
And spend it graciously
For saddened souls, for hearts that ache and bleed.
It will return to thee.

Thou wilt thyself grow richer for the day
When thou didst give it all.
Some choicer treasure will the deed repay,
The service great or small.

Give but thy best; the cause is worth the loss
If loss it ever be
That comes in humbly taking up the cross
And following, Master, Thee.

Oh, if these hidden treasures all were brought
And at His feet laid low
There were a good for men unknown, unthought
In their rich overflow!

1902.

CHASTENING.

Thy hand up me, Lord, I feel,
Thy hand to hurt me and to heal;
For well I know the chastening weight
Will some new inward life create.

Before the scourge I humbly bow,
My recreancy I allow.
Give me in meekness to endure,
To grow more upright and more pure.

In love is all Thy scourging sent
And only for my betterment.
I kiss the hand that holds the rod
And humbly own the right, my God.

I see a pathway hid before.
From Thy path let me stray no more.
Be Thou my comforter and I
Will seek to serve Thee faithfully.

So deaf was I to Thy high call,
In weakness I gave heed to all
The daily common trivial pleas
That emptied Time's choice treasures.

One thing from henceforth I will do,
With Thy support, the noblest too,
For aught beneath the noblest still
Is lower than Thy sovereign will.

TO DO AND DARE.

Give me no asphodel meadows
Where frolic the sunlight and shadows,
Nor lotus-fields fair
With sleep-giving air,
Whence Lethe's slow, unmindful stream flows

Give me no ease-breathing palace,
Riches of board or of chalice,
To surfeit the hours
And weaken my powers.

Spare their enervating solace.

Give me no vaulting ambition,
Longing for lofty condition,
For honor and fame
To brighten my name.
Spare me its wearing attrition.

Give me no loving so tender
As to compel the surrender
Of powers that are Thine
To its human confine.
A full heart to Thee I would render.

Nay, give me the field of endeavor,
Near the conflicts of life let me hover
To stand for the right
And relentlessly fight
And wrong's subtle evils discover.

I choose for my lot, self-denial
The storm and the fight and the trial
That come to the share
Of the souls everywhere
Who champion the highest ideal.

At last when the struggle is over,
My weapons restored to their cover;
'Neath the merciful care
Of the God I revere,
Let me find home and rest over yonder.
1902.

NEED.

I need Thee, Oh my Father
Amid the battle's din.
On my sore wounds, my Father,
Pour balm of healing in.

Upon each hurt, lay gently
Thy touch that I may feel
The rest and peace which sweetly
Possess and calm and heal.

I wait upon Thy blessing.
I thirst for Thy great love.
I need Thy care caressing,
Soft falling from above.

The darkness seems to hide Thee.
I seek and do not gain
The blessing that outside Thee
I nowhere can attain.

Oh let no shadow-curtain
Shut out Thy love, Thy face,
And leave my heart uncertain
Of Thy sustaining grace.

Reveal, reveal Thy presence,
Thy tenderness, Thy power!
Possess me with the essence
Of their life-giving dower!

Faith, cheer and strength renewing
In Thine all-loving care,
I'll gird myself for doing
Thy bidding everywhere.

WAIT ON THE LORD.

There is no night so dark, no way so dreary
But God can make it light,
Piercing the shadows with His brightening glory
Before our wondering sight.

There is no path so long and thorn-invested
But He can make a way
Wherein our feet may walk, from danger wrested
By His watch-care alway.

There is no cross so heavy but He lifts it
Till it weighs not too sore.
Right for the bending shoulders He adjusts it
Gives grace in ample store.

There is no waiting-time so long and weary,
But He foretells the end,
And gives His hidden strength in waiting dreary
And peace and love doth send.

There is no trial and no bitter portion
But He endured the same.
He knows and shares in all our wild revulsion
Against the loss and pain.

He knows for He all human ill hath suffered
To make our lot less sad,
For whom the sacrifice of life He offered
To make us whole and glad.

WHAT MUST HE BE!

Oh fair June day with sunshine streaming,
A gentle sweetness in its thrall,
And that blue dome whose radiance gleaming
Sheds its pure splendor over all;
With trees attired in fresh apparel,
So beautiful that human eye
Can but admire and humbly revel
In all their splendid pageantry,
With air so balmy sweetly bearing
The far faint fragrance of the flowers.
And everything in Nature wearing
The best expression of her powers!
If this June day so fair appeareth
And all that God hath made as good,
What is the dazzling garb He weareth
In His celestial Fatherhood?
As He beyond the heaven's far spaces
Lays His broad plans for everything
Within the Universe's reaches,
Of which He is the final Spring;
As He adorns with grace and beauty
With symmetry of form and line,
With fitness for each several duty
The products of His skill sublime,
Our eyes entranced with all the splendor

Which His projected thought reveals
Long to behold the unimaged grandeur
Which He from human eyes conceals.
The years that pass, the added riches
That fill our souls as up we strive,
Closer to Him by struggling reaches,
Nearer His likeness to arrive;
The glory of those speechless visions,
When we have fled across the years,
And slipped into the fields Elysian
To seek from Him the grace He shares;
The beauty in all noble spirits,
Who are reflectors of His life,
All that the race from Him inherits
With His majestic soul is rife.
Back of all loftiest conceptions
That Science from His work uprears,
Back of all logical corrections
Which truth from growing knowledge bears,
Back of all beauty, all religion,
Philosophy, all thought's confine,
Back of all wonders of creation,
Greater than all and more sublime,
God stands, the Infinite, unbounded,
By space's farthest dark confine,
All purity and truth surrounded
By majesty and grace divine.
The deepest essence of His being
Is dear to every human soul;
It is the quest of all men seeing
The good that makes men true and whole.
The gracious force o'er all surpassing,

In its wide power than all more strong,
Victorious and all inspiring
Who for the best in living long.
His Name is Love, and the far distance
Of Heaven's august eternal heights
Bows down to earth without resistance
Because in loving He delights.
1902.

OUTER AND INNER SELVES.

The outer self toils in the busy street.
It takes its place with men.
It fashions a home to be made complete
With all good in human ken.

The inner self stands in the secret place
Its outer comrade knows.
Creatively acting it forms each grace
Its plastic double shows.

The outer self walks in the haunts of men
And greets with the mien it will
The faces of great or lowly when
It meets them, good or ill.

The inner self sits at the judge's seat
And sentence gives for each,
The few that pass unblamed will greet
As in fair friendship's reach.

The outer self's range is sadly hemmed

By time and strength and place.
The inner self's compass is not condemned
To bounds of sordid space.

The outer self waits with a timid air
A smile on Fortune's face,
Or ploddingly walks in the alley, where
All rubbish finds its place.

The inner self soars on its wide-spread wings
To lands of broad renown.
It lives with the great and proudly sings
Of gains unseen, unknown.

But ever the outer self wears a chain
That stays its comrade's flight,
And e'er by blindness o'er again
It proves the inner's blight.

But the inner self wills and rules and is
And grows from day to day,
To the outer self its ideal gives,
And its ultimate destiny,
1895. Terre Haute, Ind.

CHOICE.

It were better in dust and in heat
To toil on the rugged street
And fail in the effort a highway to make
More useful to men, for sweet charity's sake,
Than in slothfulness ease to entreat.

It were better some cause to uphold
With courage and fortitude bold
 To strain every nerve and exhaust every power
 And see no result worth the fight and the hour
Than to husband a treasure untold.

It were better some effort to plan
For the smallest uplifting of man,
 And in the hard struggle the good to attain
 To brave opposition and trouble in vain
Than place on brave service the ban.

It were better to struggle always,
Against wrong and temptation to pray,
 Than hermit-like live in a solitude wild,
 By no human witchery ever beguiled,
To no worldly trial a prey.

For toil is soul-purpose explained,
From struggle new strength is attained,
 And he who endeavors some uplift to bring
 To others, has risen like bird on its wing
And some higher outlook has gained.

And the cause for which life-blood is spent,
Some high inspiration has lent
 To him who has fought and to him who looks on
 The life-current quickens where'er the deed's
 known,
To the cause other heroes are sent.
1902.

THE SEARCH-LIGHT.

Let no dark night the evil in me hide
From sight of those who jeering would deride!
Oh Father hear my being's inmost plea,
Grant there may be no evil hid in me.

Grant, Oh Thou Fount of all unmeasured good,
Ample to give to me the best I would,
Grant I may be so loyal to Thy will,
No evil shall within my bosom dwell.

Grant I may be so free from sin's dark stain,
So true in purpose to Thy just domain
No matter on what summit I may be
Thou mayest know I have been true to Thee.

Grant that the search-light, howe'er strong it be,
May find no cherished thought of ill in me,
No stain left there by my indulgent will,
No mark or spot or blemish blameable.

Grant that in me the honor of Thy name
May suffer from no dark ignoble stain,
But that Thy pure and holy life may be
Made manifest to sinful men in me.

Oh thou that takest to Thy fair abode
The pure in heart to dwell with Thee, my God,
Shelter Thou me from Life's assoiling ill
And give me grace to do Thy holy will.

1902.

KEEP THYSELF PURE.

From a Sermon.

Keep thyself pure! Let not the grosser crime
Which stains our cities with its poisonous slime,
Dragging to ruin and to blank despair
The hearts of young and aged everywhere,
Sieze on thy virile spirit and defile.
Keep thyself pure for the great afterwhile.

Keep thyself pure, nor in thine own domain
Endure uncleanness from outer stain.
He who would rise to purer life within
Must free the encroaching outer life from sin.
Thy deeds express what thou thyself must be.
Keep thyself pure or they will ruin thee.

Keep thyself pure! Let not the unchaste word
Rise to thy thoughts or from thy lips be heard.
Let no vile sound of blasphemy have part
In the pure atmosphere wherein thou art.
Thy words are but the index of thy soul.
Keep thyself pure, thy tongue within control.

Keep thyself pure; thy mind, thy heart, thy will,
For what thou thinkest in thy citadel,
The center of thy being, all unknown,
Will make thee that which thou one day must own.
Think not to separate thy thought from thee.
Thy thought, thine inmost life and soul will be.

Keep thyself pure, in tone, in touch, in look!

No wanderings from that high standard brook!
Then joy unfathomed shall become thy part,
For to see God is for the pure in heart.
That wondrous vision now is hid from thee.
Keep thyself pure and thou at length shalt see!
1902.

COMPLETE IN THEE.

Complete in Thee; Oh blessed Lord!
Thou only hast the power
To satisfy the needy heart
And give sweet rest each hour.

Not all the store of worldly good
In heaped-up treasure piled
Can still the longing of the soul
To Thee unreconciled.

But when Thou makest Thine abode
Where Thou shouldst ever dwell
Within the heart; peace, faith and hope
All enter there as well.

Oh mystery and grandeur joined
With condescending love!
Make this my heart Thy throne on earth
And mine Thy home above.
1902.

TO A COIN.

Of no great worth art thou, my message-bearer.

Thou hast no grace nor beauty;

But thou must be of my good-will the sharer,

And in my stead do duty.

I envy thee thy field of far-off serving,

The joy that thou dost carry.

Thou wilt be spent for those so long deserving

The balm for all life's worry.

Tell them that soon will dawn a brighter morning

For all in shadow staying,

And good men wealth and knowledge be out-pouring

After the long delaying.

Thou little earnest of that future plenty

Tell them the time is nearing

When hearts will burn to spend munificently

Of riches for their cheering.

God speed the day when hearts shall grow more
tender

To all earth's needy people,

When men rejoice in splendid self-surrender

And all the world disciple!

Thou little coin; thou canst not much encompass

Of that great final labor!

My prayer with thee I send; be thou the compass
To the last grand endeavor.
1902.

HOW BEST LOVE.

We are so careful of the ones we love,
So fearful lest some chance should bring them
harm.

We long to save them from the threatening drove
Of fancied dangers that our souls alarm.

We fence them in with our e'er-watchful care
From all that seems to menace future pain.
We seek them blooming fields and balmy air
Enchanted homes where woe may not come in.

It is in vain; our choicest efforts fail,
Or if we make a shelter from the storm,
We find the sunshine leaves them dull and pale
Or rank in growth, or fashioned without charm.

When love is wiser we shall learn the truth
That He who loves far more than e'er could we,
Gives pain and anguish, sorrow, wrong and ruth
To those He fosters in His clemency.

No blast is spared when bitter blast is meet
No needed kindly sunshine fails above.
He sends to them the pain and blessing sweet
Whom He hath compassed with His tender love.

Let us be wiser, send the hard thrust home
Where loving service would the blow demand,
For love will to a richer fruitage come
When the unflinching blow falls from the hand.

ABSOLUTE SURRENDER.

The brook turns this way and that to pass
The tangle of leaves and weeds,
Of stones and rubbish that so harrass
Its way through the whispering reeds.

It swells when the freshet comes pouring down,
And stops for the rubbish no more;
The gathered débris that has formed its bound
Is washed from the stream and shore.

It makes a wide way for its future course,
And sings in its conquering glee.
It leaves to the refuse no other recourse
Than to turn with the current and flee.

The refuse that ruffles our sunny stream
Of joy in ideals high,
Bars here and there with defiant gleam,
A beautiful destiny.

But one day the torrent of cleansing roars,
And the refuse is swept away;
The little odd ends and the dam whose shores
Have been stagnant many a day.

We feel the swell of the washing wave,
We shrink as the tempests beat;
But the morning shines where clear waters lave
A channel clean and sweet.
1902.

TRIBUTE TO THE PAST.

The past is gone but still the past is here
To lay its hand on all we are and do.
Its blessing and its curse are hovering near
To help or harm us in each deed anew.

All we have been, all thoughts by us pursued,
All effort, all ideals by us set,
All sin and tolerance of unsubdued
Enticing evil now are to be met.

Each reaches out to draw us from our way,
Upward or downward, to or from life's goal,
Each bears a chain that binds in slavery
The subjugated forces of the soul.

Let him who will be master of his life
Make for large ministry a noble past,
To urge him ever to a nobler strife,
For higher issues and a crown at last.

The past, all we have been, we are to-day,
He who does wrong must shudder as he sins,
But he who walks an upward path alway,
May triumph as each victory he wins.

Life, beauty, goodness, friendship, love and peace,
All may belong to him who will attain.
In this world heaven and beyond, release
From all of mortal woe and loss and pain.
1903.

DEFENDERS.

Where childhood is debased,
To dull routine and soulless toil,
Where womanhood's disgraced,
As the brute tyrant's proper spoil,
Where'er pure living is debarred,
Right summons forth her battle-scarred
Defenders.

Where open lie all ways
To the base sins of our low years,
Where justice e'en delays,
For the poor tyrant that she fears,
Wherever rum shall raise a hand
Omnipotent in any land
Send defenders.

Wherever human toil
Becomes of haughty wealth the slave,
Where'er men would despoil
The helpless, needy, poor, men crave
With burning heart and pleading eye,
Tears falling for such tragedy,
Defenders.

Wherever low designs
Rule in the choice of men and law,
Where policy combines
With selfish purpose to o'erawe
The just and upright, let there be
For right a speedy victory!
Send defenders.

Where'er is heard the cry
Of hopeless anguish, pain unsoothed,
Of cruel tyranny
Against the weak, the right, the good;
Where'er the need calls to high Heaven
And sin unblushingly has thriven,
Send defenders.

1902.

"I WILL FINISH THE WORK THAT THOU GAV-
EST ME TO DO."

The width of earth and heaven lie
Before my eager, longing eye,
Desirous of my destiny.

And yet, one narrow path is there
My path to follow everywhere,
The limit of my life and care.

I ask no more; that is the way
Toward which I long from day to day,
Wherein my wandering feet would stay.

Let me but follow all along,
Ne'er falter and fore'er grow strong,
Work humbly and o'ercome the wrong.

Some day, whene'er Thy will it be
Some fair sweet day, be this my plea:
I did the work Thou gavest me.
1902.

A SONNET.

In the dim years where faith and hope keep guard
About the promise of a fairer age,
None will a fiercer fight with evil wage
Than maidenhood sent forth with ranks unscarred.
No black-winged hosts their progress shall retard,
No cause so hopeless but they may assuage
Its ills; their love so pure and calm and sage,
Their faith provider of its own reward.
Bright o'er the east the glow of youth increases,
A braver, stronger, truer sisterhood,
The presage of a nobler womanhood,
More potent 'gainst all evil's sad diseases.
Let the clear light the farthest west illumine;
And all earth's dross in holiness consume.
1903.

ON TRIAL.

Once He was tried before the bar,
At Pilate's cruel judgment-seat
And meekly suffered every scar

.

From scourge and thorn, from jeer and threat.

Once to have borne the hurt and shame
From cruel and unrighteous test,
And humbly to have taken blame
Of every sin by man confessed,

That was enough! Oh ask no more
Who sin or come with cold complaints!
For us the ignoble cross He bore,
There suffered for all human taints.

Must He be spit upon again
And wear the thorns in this hard age
Which lifts to fame and honor men
Of base and worldly tutelage?

Yes, He is tried and o'er and o'er;
Too seldom honored, suffering shame
For those who take the name He bore
Often betray it and defame.

It is a holy name and men
Who make it theirs must comprehend
Its greatness. 'Tis theirs only when
The abiding Christ His grace doth send.

To take the Saviour's name implies
Surrendering in all to Him.
Let us to this high purpose rise
And the name Christian rightly win.
1902.

A PLEA.

Make me sad enough, my Lord,
To feel the bitter throb
Of pain that wells in human hearts
To rise in stifled sob.

Make me poor enough, my Lord,
To feel the heavy weight
Of others' want and care and need,
No wealth but Thine can sate.

Make me wise enough, my Lord,
To say the fitting word,
Or keep the hush of silence when
But silence should be heard.

Make me good enough, my Lord,
To wish no other joy
Than the happy doing of Thy will
My nature's best employ.
1902.

THROUGH THE MAELSTROM.

Into Life's fierce, raging maelstrom,
Jesus came one blessed day,
Sailed through it from farthest circle,
Through its vortex, safe away,
Proving that no soul need ever
To its raging be a prey,

With His power.

An unfathomed current guided
All the weaker human side
Of His unsolved dual nature
Wrong unspotted to outride.
This unfathomed stream He left us
When for our misdeeds He died,
In us to abide.

If His life in me be fashioned,
As His will and mine desire,
I may safely ride the whirlpool
In the stream of Holy Fire
And like Him, may carry with me
All who with me will aspire;
By Him alone.
1902.

OUT TO SEA.

The harbor is full of dangerous shoals
And rocks that reach and threaten the holds
Of vessels bound away,
But the pilot's aboard and has safely steered
Over the dangerous course we feared;
We are passing out to sea.

Over the bar we are slipping away
Into the ocean, still and gray,
Into the pathless sea.
But the pilot still will mark our course,

With chart and compass his resource
As we voyage on our way.

Inch by inch the dock we left,
Passing the ships to right and left
And tiny fishing-craft;
The wave-beat shores of cities old,
And long coast-lines where breakers hold
Requiems o'er ship and raft.

Some harbors spread the Sirens' spell
Some straits with untold dangers swell,
But our Pilot marks the way;
Inch by inch He keeps the prow
To the passage He's steering through,
Out to the broad, broad sea.

Safely out there's room to spare,
Danger's threat may pass us there,
As we calmly make our way,
Still in the care of our faithful Guide,
On with the rising and falling tide,
Over Life's trackless sea.

LITTLE MAID.

Must I lose thee from thy setting,
Little maid?
Let thee, all the good forgetting,
Little maid,
All thy lofty aspiration,
All impulsive consecration.

Seek some paltry recreation,
Little maid?

I have sought for thee the dawning,
Little maid,
Of a higher holier morning,
Little maid,
When all lower aims denying,
For the highest blessing sighing
Thou shouldst rise, the best descrying,
Little maid.

Must I see thee slip and falter,
Little maid,
All thy high-born longings alter,
Little maid,
All thy nobler purpose losing,
For the trifles thou are choosing,
While true joy thou are refusing,
Little maid?

Yet I stretch my hands to hold thee,
Little maid,
From the evil would enfold thee,
Little maid.
I must leave thee in God's keeping,
Through thy sowing and thy reaping,
Through thy soul's lethargic sleeping,
Little maid.

Yes, to Thee I must commend her,
Little maid,

May Thy care from ill defend her,
 Little maid,
May Thy sun and tempest beating,
Bring their scarring, healing greeting,
Finally her good completing,
 Little maid.
1902.

THERE IS NO LOSS.

There is no loss; the flowers that fade
 Have left their sweetness in our hearts,
And bloom again when winter's shade,
 And winter's biting chill departs.

The tree that lays its prostrate length
 Athwart the hillside where it stood,
Has all its years of growth and strength
 In fallen leaf and solid wood.

The sun that on my pathway shines
 And seems to waste its lavish power,
Lives o'er again in fields and vines,
 In blade and leaf, in bud and flower.

The earth is richer for the sun,
 The spring-time brighter for the flower.
Though to the sea the rivers run,
 They come again in cloud and shower.

No force is lost and none ill-spent
 Which All-creative Wisdom guides.

No sand-grain but its weight is lent
To all the universe besides.

In those far regions of the soul
Whose hidden vales God only knows,
The same wise law is in control,
Like compensation He bestows.

There is no loss. The severed ties
Of olden friendships, loved ones gone,
Have served their sacred destinies
In hearts to nobler living won.

The heart's best bud and blossom spring
Sometimes beneath love's sunny rays,
Sometimes through the long culturing
Of desolated nights and days.

The soul needs winter like the soil,
And is enriched by cold and shade.
Some sunny summer will reveal
Sweet grace the gloomy past has made.

The love which falls before the blow
Of some sharp axe-blade flat and prone,
May lift a hundred heads; bestow
Refreshing shade before unknown.

The kindly thought that would have spent
Its all on some belovéd head
Finds a whole throng of needy sent
To share in all the good out-spread.

The patience that would meekly bear
One humble cross from dawn till dark,
Finds other uses for its care,
Surrendering, endurance, work.

Love is not lost, nor all the best
Which loving hearts would freely spend.
'Tis spread for those before unblest,
Grows sweeter, richer to the end.

The gathered blessings of the past
Will add to all the present gives,
And the fair future will at last
Hold all that Life from God derives.
1902.

STRENGTHEN US.

Our hearts grow faint along Life's rugged pathway,
Our courage sinks and fades;
Strengthen Thou us, Oh Father, Thou Almighty,
Where hang sin's gloomy shades!

Strengthen Thou us; give to us but the vision
Of Thine arm's naked power!
With hearts renewed, we'll bless the sight Elysian,
And falter, Lord, no more.

Oh, there are many pitfalls on our journey,
And dangers, seen, unseen.
We fear the lists of this gigantic tourney,
Dost Thou not enter in.

But if Thou join our onset, lance and armor,
In our behalf dost fight,
We will endure the assault without a tremor,
And battle for the right.

We will give heed to all Thy heavenly warning,
And fearing not, advance,
For Thy upholding strength and Thy discerning
Will keep us from mischance.

Strengthen Thou us! Endue us with Thy spirit!
Make us in all Thine own,
And we will bow our hearts to adore the merit
Of the great God triune.

“To be strenghtened with might by his spirit in
the inner man.” Eph. 3: 16.

WITH WHOM GOD IS WELL PLEASED.

He walks the street with steady pace,
A gentle sweetness in his face.
Nothing about the garb he wears
Speaks of the unseen world he shares.

A common passer he might seem,
Unmarked by wealth's alluring gleam,
Not courted by the careless throng
As silently he walks along.

Judge him not lightly, passer-by,
Nor by some fleeting pattern try,

To make the limit of his power
Or mark the measure of his dower.

Nor from the standards of our day,
An earthly measure idly lay;
Humble his manner, but the man
By much exceeds the common plan.

The years have passed since he became
A living witness to the Name,
And the eternal power of Him
Who broke the strength of canceled sin.

Since then he grows from hour to hour
As blossoms forth the unfolding flower,
Or in the woods the sturdy oak
Grows stronger 'spite the tempest's stroke.

The heavenly Pattern-Life he lays
On the succession of his days,
Lets here and there the Hand Divine
Cut off the useless, lay the line

True to the high ideal set
With prayer it may be ever met,
Nor falters though there come the shock
Of hacking steel 'gainst crumbling rock.

The product of the years? Ah, well!
None but his dearest ones can tell
The story of the life divine
Which through the mortal frame may shine.

He passes! 'Tis no common man
Who walks so humble; as you scan
The rugged sweetness of his face,
Rich with the marks of strength and grace,

Not read at sight by worldly eyes,
But a sure ensign of the skies
And only in those beings found
Who linger oft on holy ground.

YE ARE GOD'S POEM.

A master sang a song of classic worth,
Inwrought with tales of old-time mythic birth,
And intricate, with hidden meanings wound
Into the fabric with a skill profound.

A wistful reader read the well-wrought tale,
Finding it finished but in this to fail,
That the proud artist who had formed its grace
Left for the heart no sunny resting-place.

Another walked the common ways of life,
Studied the heart of man, its need its strife.
He struggled with the strugglers, helped the poor,
And turned no stranger friendless from his door.

Out of his life with men a poem grew
Instinct with human labor, love and rue,
Singing the cure for pain, the balm for loss,
Showing the sparkling jewels in the cross;

Lifting the veil that hides too oft from view
The worth of being right and brave and true.
His humble song found many a hearing ear,
Greeting with gladness its sweet call of cheer.

We are God's poem if we will His will
And under His wise fashioning are still,
No longer seeking some far flight of song
Removed from human need and common wrong.

Not striving by some fleeting fancy drawn
To weave ourselves a bower with roses strown,
Nor decking the pale triumph of an hour
With the small splendor of our selfish power.

No melody by our poor wisdom wrought
Smites life's sweet strings till they pass the reach of
thought.

If we would hear entranced a song sublime
Our lives must answer to the Hand Divine.

What shall the poem be which He evokes
From erstwhile dissonance that sin provokes?
He is the Master-Poet and His skill
Can win sweet harmonies from wrong and ill;

For wrong and ill surrendered are the things
From which He fashions forth the Life on Wings.
Trial and tribulation, even these
Are full of heavenly possibilities.

We need not seek for fame and noble place

Among the human-poems of our race,
Unless He summons to the perilous height
We need not scale it with our awkward might.

Humble was He, our matchless Pattern-Song,
Though without peer He walked our sands along,
Straining no nerve to reach some favored place,
He calmly bore His need and His disgrace.

Because He could be rich and great and famed,
Because for us He lowly was and named
With the transgressors, with our sins forgiven
We'll hail Him as our Prince of Peace in heaven.

Because we choose the way in which He led,
Through even us, God's needy may be fed;
With all His gifts of service and of rest.
We may be useful, helpful and be blessed

At last when all the songs of life are sung,
And ours with others their low notes have rung,
They will ascend with sweeter tones inwrought
Than we with holden eyes and ears had thought.
1901.

DELIVERANCE.

If Thou wilt deliver my soul, Oh Lord,
From the dangers that threatens my way,
From the charms that entice with fair device,
I'll praise Thee forever and aye.

If Thou wilt deliver my soul, Oh Lord,
From the sins that beset me to-day,
With joy unfeigned, I'll adore Thy name,
And bless Thee forever and aye.

If Thou wilt deliver my soul, Oh Lord,
From the doubts that too oft dismay,
And stay by my side, Oh Crucified,
I'll serve Thee forever and aye.

If Thou wilt deliver my soul, Oh Lord,
And keep, uplift and stay,
In that sunlit clime beyond earth and time,
I'll crown Thee forever and aye.

If Thou wilt deliver my soul, Oh Lord,
From the low, the base away,
And keep me clean as in heaven's pure beam,
I'll love Thee forever and aye.

THE NEW CHURCH.

To its sweet peaceful closing draws the day,
While to the notes of gentle harmony,
And with the reverence of silent prayer,
A church is given to God's keeping care.

Row upon row of heads in homage bowed,
Heart joined with heart, the sacred presence crowd.
The holy rite is over; to high heaven
White angels tell: a house to God is given.

No common lot this solemn deed insures,
So long as brick with mortar still endures.
No base employ, no sinful use or low
Can with this structure's sacred title go.

Cherished and loved from the first Sabbath on,
Through all the changing years of the unknown,
In faith and living all men hold most dear,
Will grow through helpfulness and nurture here.

To this pure shrine will come the prattling child,
In loving arms, an offering undefiled,
By the pure emblem of this holy place,
Given to a life of e'er unfolding grace.

Here with a step which seems to joy but sloth,
Will youth and maiden come to pledge their troth,
While all the colored windows shine more bright,
For the sweet hopeful gladness of the sight.

And slow behind the black and solemn bier,
The mourners for the dead will gather here,
Will here find comfort for the years of pain,
For reaching out of empty arms in vain.

Here, blessed scene, will souls from sin set free
Proclaim with joy the Master's sovereignty.
Oh, o'er and over, o'er and o'er again,
May happy hearts take up this glad refrain!

May peace and love possess this sacred shrine!
May men see here the light from heaven shine!

Its name, its record in the hereafter be
Worthy the white rays of eternity!

The first calm evening of its service falls
On sacred spire and consecrated walls.
All that may be is trusted to His care
Who gave Himself all human need to share.
1893.

• INCENSE.

Thy gifts with grateful faith to use,
The way of prayer Thy people choose.
Their simple trust, their earnest plea
Bears precious incense up to Thee.

Forgive, Oh Father, pityingly,
The lack in this sweet ministry,
And teach us by some urgent care
To find the peaceful way of prayer.

Grant to us hearts that feel the need,
The wounds from which Thy people bleed,
And lay upon us all the weight
Which human loss and pain create.

Help us to know as Thou hast known
The anguish 'neath which others groan,
And then to bear their need to Thee
Who lovest all humanity.

So may some fragrance, fine and sweet

Arise to Thee in worship meet,
And humble human words find grace,
Like incense rare before Thy face.

1902.

ON WINGS OF FAITH.

Mount up, mount up, my soul!
Leave the low swamp-land and morass,
The marsh and treacherous quick-sand pass,
And rise toward the heavenly blue,
Proclaiming realms sublime and new!
Mount up, my soul, away!

Mount up, mount up, my soul!
The level plain is not for thee,
The soil's unseeing ministry,
The routine that the day completes,
That no unbound horizon greets.
Mount up, mount up, away!

Mount up, mount up, my soul!
Stop not where swell the upland slopes,
Nor stay with them thy high-aimed hopes,
Beyond the heights lie all untrod
The wide onreaching realms of God.
Stay not, my soul, speed on!

Mount up, mount up, my soul!
Let faith lend wings and give thee flight,
That thou mayst reach the unshadowed light
Of truth and purity divine,

That may for thee forever shine.
Mount up, aspire, attain!

1903.

OF HIS KINGDOM THERE SHALL BE NO END.

No end to all its love and peace and blessing,
It matters not how Satan's forces rage.
No end although malicious foes oppressing,
Have injured right with stain and base outrage.

No end! Oh hear the angelic hosts proclaim it,
From David's throne to Olive's garden green,
And thence with song in every land declaim it,
Till men bow down and worship the unseen.

No end! Ye sad, ye poor and hope-forsaken,
Whom sinful power has chained to do its will.
No end! Fear not for God your cause has taken;
He fights for all the oppressed and injured still.

No end, no end! The eastern sky is glowing!
No proud hypocrisy can face the day.
Back to the darkness whence its deeds are flowing,
Hooded and cloaked with good it steals away.

No end, no end! Who dares in simple honor,
To make the Master's words his life and creed,
With soul unstained shall meet the blessed Donor
Of every good the longing heart may need.

No end, no end! Fling far the blessed story!

Across the West-land let the echoes ring,
And the far Orient redden with the glory
That men proclaim and heaven-born seraphs sing.
1903.

PERENNIAL GOOD.

"Bring all the years to Me!" He said.
"I count the long years Mine,
When Thou wast born and reared and wed.
Thy life in My design."

"Bring all the years to Me," He said.
"Didst call the first years good,
With youth's fair summers on thy head,
And frolics in the wood?"

"When the first long illness coldly let
Its shade steal o'er thy brow,
And cruel Death stood by to set
His mark on, saidst, "What now?"

Didst call the failures evil, child,
The struggle and the loss,
The nights of trouble dark and wild,
The burden and the cross?"

"The years are Mine, all planned for thee;
Each changeful year is given,
To make thy life a treasury
All jewel-stored for heaven."

"Where didst thou learn endurance, child?
Was't not in some bare lot,
Where gloom opposed thy sunshine mild,
And foes thy downfall sought?"

"Where didst thou learn forgiveness' grace?
Was't not from unjust deed
Forgiven, with thy shining face,
In peace bowed to My creed?"

"And where did humble patience grow,
To suffer and be still,
But where the days were long and slow,
Sad, tedious and ill?"

"Hast thou learned every virtue now,
To bear the slanderous tongue;
To make Me thine avenger, bow
Submissively to wrong?"

"Thou canst not life's strange ways adjust.
'Twere ill with all years fair.
How couldst thou learn in Me to trust
With sunshine everywhere?"

"Bring all thy varied years to Me!
Take from My hand thy life,
And I will fill with good for thee
The years of calm and strife."
1903.

HELP THOU MINE UNBELIEF.

Whate'er I do, where'er I go,
 Apart from Thee, no true relief.
When troubles like an ocean roll,
 Help Thou mine unbelief!

To keep my soul there is no power
 In fierce temptation, loss and grief,
Without Thee, through each dangerous hour.
 Help Thou mine unbelief!

Give me a faith that will not doubt,
 That in all peril brings belief
That Thou Thy good will workest out!
 Help Thou mine unbelief!

Help me to know Thou wilt preserve
 My soul and bring me sure relief
From ill! Oh Thou whom I would serve
 Help Thou mine unbelief!
1903.

HE WALKS WITH ME.

Through all the changes life may bring,
'Midst care and pleasure, everything
Of good or ill, of joy or woe,
There is no succor for my soul
 He walks with me! He walks with me!

Sometimes the sunny hours flit by
Beguiled by sweetest melody,
Sometimes the clouds of sorrow roll
Across the heaven of my soul.
He walks with me! He walks with me!

Sometimes temptations, sudden, fierce,
My heart's firm purpose rudely pierce,
But ere my courage fades away,
I hear a voice so gently say:
"He walks with thee! He walks with thee!"

Between the care not mine to know,
And the cherished wish I must forego,
Between unworthy thoughts and me,
And all of harm or jeopardy,
He walks with me! He walks with me!

And so His calm and peace sink deep,
Where my soul's faith its tryst doth keep.
Whatever life on me bestow,
I've at His side a heaven below.
He walks with me! He walks with me!

THE BATTLE-LINE.

That thin and broken battle-line,
Enlisted in a cause Divine
Sweeps round the world.
On what strange fields its out-posts lie,
Beneath what dark forbidding sky
Its flag's unfurled!

The base of its supplies is here
Where many waste a treasure dear
 To human good,
While they who bear the battle's brunt,
Who dare the unknown to confront
 Need brotherhood.

They need a kindlier sympathy,
They need unselfish ministry,
 In rich supply.
They need a larger company
To join them, for humanity
 To do and die.

Thin battle-line across the plains
Of age-old China's vast domains,
 Yet strong of will;
It battles on in solitude,
And serves with faithful fortitude,
 In good or ill.

Scarred veterans of many a fight
Defend the cause 'mid India's blight,
 Hunger and pest,
And falter not but forward urge
Their helpers where the ways diverge,
 Nor seek for rest.

Around the world they battle on
To place the Cross illumed upon
 Each heathen height.
To cast the idol from its shrine,

And give instead one God Divine
Of love and light.

Let not the thin line thinner grow,
From cowardly neglect to show
A loyal trust!
From all that God to men has given,
May lavish gifts return to heaven
Devotion just!
1902.

CHRIST IS WITH THEE.

The storm is raging wildly o'er the sea
A sailor struggling with a creaking sail,
Wind-blown and buffeted and fiercely tried,
Is driven to wait for strength with gasping breath.
He hears a soft voice speaking in the storm;
"Christ is with thee!"
Life's failing pulse beats stronger now and he
More bravely faces storm and rocking sea.

A mother fares toward the close of day.
Her step is weary; toil with myriad voice
Has called her to its tasks the long hours through.
The wailing child now struggles with her calm,
When through the fret of tempest round her soul,
"Christ is with thee!"
Is breathed upon the air and her unrest
Sinks into silence which God's peace has blessed.

With swift unerring eyes, the column's length

An accountant reckons, thinking o'er meanwhile
The gain that might be his for taking—if—
Yes—if—. Home and its needs press on his heart.
He scans the potent figures, tempted much.

Christ is with thee!"

A stern and warning voice speaks in his ear
And he is kept from sin by saving fear.

A head bows low in sorrow after loss,
So low that none may share the mourner's grief.
He shuts outside the pitying, friendly heart,
And self-imprisoned wildly gropes and reels
And beats his walls of fate in sightless woe.

"Christ is with thee!"

A voice most tender reaches his deaf ear
Whose heavenly love brings the first ray of cheer.

Despair sits on this forehead, harsh and cold.
Life's stately shafts and architraves lie low,
For sin has wrought its ugliest, deadliest work;
A man with endless dreams and heavenly hopes
Has fallen in the withering clutch of sin.

"Christ is with thee!"

A strange sweet hope from ashes gray doth rise
And fly believing upward to the skies.

Another heart is lonely, solitary,
While deserts waste and bare stretch every way
And naught gives company but melancholy,
And long and useless seems life's passing care.
The far dull plains are broken by a word;

"Christ is with thee!"

A soft shade lighter is the leaden sky,
As unseen wings of blessedness pass by.

In life's e'er-changing struggle there is none
Or man or woman whom sweet hope has left
In utter desolation, lacking all,
For over all earth's ways, however far,
Where men in need are reaching out for help,
"Christ is with thee!"
Is with thee, friend, with thee, yes e'er with thee,
And gives to thee His gracious ministry.
1905.

A HYMN OF THANKSGIVING.

In thronged nave and cabin rude
The nation bows in gratitude
And offers in exultant lays
To God her sacrifice of praise.

Columbia's broad and fertile plains,
Her cities' myriad denizens,
Her homes, her commerce, learning, state
Thy gracious favor celebrate.

The northern fisher sends the song
With cheer, his rugged cliffs along,
And careless island children bring
To Thee their simple offering.

For plenty, gracious mate of peace,
For right's unheralded increase,

For higher aim and wiser thought
Into the nation's service brought,

We thank Thee, Father of us all,
On whom Thy benedictions fall.
'To Thee youth's happy song ascends
And with it manhood's worship blends.

Thy hand doth hold the coming years.
Thy love our finite vision cheers.
That nation's future bright shall be
Which finds its highest good in Thee.
1904.

SLAYING THE DRAGON.

The mountain sank into the stream,
With hollows veiled by forest-trees,
And caverns hid from light and breeze
In midnight's gloom or noonday's gleam.

On those wild slopes a dragon lay
Before whom hundreds had gone down,
With gaping wounds and dying swoon,
Leaving humanity its prey.

One day a hunter scaled the slope
And heard the age-old dragon roar,
Though he had fled from him before,
That day he longed with him to cope.

"He can be slain, this vicious fiend,

He is but finite, he must die.
Some one will slay him, why not I?
Too long hath he the good demeaned."

The hunter armed him for the fight,
And knowing that he must endure
A struggle long and hard, secure
He made his armor, strong and bright,

With utmost care the weapons chose,
The tarn-cap that should shelter lend
When he dared valiantly ascend
Against this chief of human foes.

He climbed the height and fought with zeal,
The dragon bore the wounds he gave
Now seemed a victor, now a slave
To him who fought for human weal.

When the low sun its level ray
Across the somber tree-trunks cast,
With battle worn and sore harassed,
The warrior halted for the day.

The still night had not brought him peace
For the dragon lay on the slope and slept
And when the morning dawned he crept
Upon his foe with wily ease.

So o'er and over, day by day,
With heart of trust and dauntless cheer,
Defying every call of fear

The warrior held the fiend at bay.

Sometimes the wild beast's breath grew faint
His nostrils' fire was almost gone,
The warrior shouted the hills along:
"Fear not the venomous dragon's taint."

But up the monster rose again,
Where victory-cries had filled the air,
And a hidden force swept the hill-side bare,
And the warrior seemed to fight in vain.

The forest creaked beneath the blows
The monster death and the wild things fled.
The daring warrior sweat and bled.
Fear lay on the mountain, loss and woes.

The tarn-cap sheltered the valiant knight
When he sank defeated in the strife,
And gave new courage and wakening life
To fit him for another fight.

So on he battled, on and on.
He would not yield for the cap was nigh,
And spread its hopeful mystery
And cheered him forward, on and on.

Until when long had been the strife
And almost hopeless each dark day
The dragon fell in the bitter fray
Shorn of power against the hero's life.

Who is the warrior? The Christian soul.
What is the fiend? Besetting sin.
The tarn-cap? Faith that God will win
Our fight by His all-wise control.

Who meets the foe with faith and cheer
Will win his battle by grace Divine,
But he who flees must fight sometime
The same old foe with a heart of fear.

Who once has won in the stormy fray
Fears not the enemy once so dread
For he knows God's grace upon him is shed
And He will help him in all the way.
1903.

RATHER.

I had rather be I
With the dust 'neath my feet and the sun
Beating down all its force on my crown,
Than to be at the head of a land,
By unscrupulous trickery manned,
And to know that each act of my will,
Each thought, each vague purpose must still
For cold, self-centered uses be planned.

I had rather be I!
I had rather plod on through the heat,
Cheeks ablaze, mouth adroop, weary feet,
Speaking truly and frankly to each
Whom my message in passing may reach,

Than to guage by its final effect
With all care for avoiding some wreck,
Each expression of face or of speech.

I had rather be I!
I had rather be simple and strong,
Fight straight out, on and on, 'gainst the wrong,
Than, Oh heaven forbid, to assoil
My soul's beautiful God-given soil
With the waste of the false and the half-compromise,
With treachery, evil and lies,
A soul's fallow fields to despoil.

I had rather be I!
Speed the day when the weight of the good
Shall in council prevail as it should,
When those who for righteousness stand
Shall rise and rule over the land,
And not shudder and shrink and grow pale
When the forces of evil assail,
And their humble surrender demand.

I had rather be I!
Speed the day that shall see beyond self's policy!
When the root of all questions shall be,
Not, "Shall I thus better succeed
To the ends of my infinite greed?"
But, "Is it the right thing and just?"
And then with all kindness, I trust,
I shall do unto others my deed.

1902.

TO-DAY, TO-MORROW.

To-day the loss, the failure, misery.

To-morrow, peace,

To-day the loss, the failure, misery,

To-morrow all surcease

Of Life's persistent wearing cares

And the daily trial that it bears.

The angels guard through all the way

Singing the triumphs day by day.

To-day the humdrum toil, the drudgery,

To-morrow joy,

To-day poor service, labor's usury,

To-morrow high employ;

For in the struggle human powers

Are fitted for great heavenly hours.

By days of routine labor blest,

Kind angels bear us to sweet rest.

THE UNCHANGING WILL OF GOD.

Onward marching, never stopping,

In the measure and the time,

Which He is to us allotting,

Onward moves our life sublime.

Never hasting, ne'er delaying,

Through the sunshine and the gloom,

Through our toiling and enjoying,
Through our pain, Life passes on.

There are times when we would falter,
Pause or change the allotted course,
When our importance would alter
The slow torment of its force.

Not one pulse-beat can we hasten
The slow waiting of to-day,
Not one heart-throb slower pace in
The staid measure of the way.

But Life's cruel fortune brightens
With the vision of the power
Growing with a force that lightens
Pain and service hour by hour.

May the pace be sure and steady,
Day by day and year by year,
Till for passing we are ready
And we enter heaven with cheer.

"HE GIVETH HIS BELOVED AS IN SLEEP."

As in sleep the scourge will fall
On nerves at rest,
We do not feel its bitter thrall,
For God knows best.
As in sleep we close the door
To chosen way,
Hearing the Voice that we adore

Bid us to stay.
As in sleep we lose the task
We love to do.
Were it for us He would not ask
Us to forego.
As in sleep we feel the sting
Of worldly air,
Soothed by the balm that Love doth bring
From elsewhere.
As in sleep we bear the wrong,
Injustice, ill,
And underneath it hear the song
God's love may will.
As in sleep Life's sorrows fall
Upon our way;
We find God's blessing in them all
If we obey.
Sleep on, sleep on all I hold dear,
Beneath the spell
So full of blessing and so near
The heavenly weal!
Belovéd, sleep and rest till when
Celestial ways
Open and waking, lure us in
With 'wilder'd gaze.
1902.

TO LOSE AN IDEAL.

Money lost may leave no stain
Friends departed come again,
Homes arise for wandering feet

After loss of loved retreat;
But the loss our souls will feel
Is the loss of high ideal.

Choicest blessing of our life,
Sometimes won in fields of strife,
Worth all self-denying pain,
Worth each struggle to attain,
For without it, life is shorn
Of its good, like day of morn.

Spare, Oh Father, every age,
Blinded vision's sacrilege!
Let each true heart look above
For Thy wisdom, strength and love.
Let no base illusion deal
Ruin to the high ideal.
1902.

IT IS WELL.

When sunshine's radiance fills the day,
And beckoning promise points the way,
To every kindly inquiry,
The answer full of trust will be,
It is well!

When petty trials of the hour
Begin to wield their vexing power,
And all the criss-cross tangled maze
Of busy cares bring need for grace,
It is well!

When deep distrust disturbs the flow
Of calm days missing love's sweet glow,
And faith gropes through the dark to feel
Its way to Him who all can heal,
It is well!

When the once peaceful ways of life
With some stupendous ill are rife,
When all life's sands with wreck are strown
And faith in human honor gone,
It is well!

Yes, all is well, whate'er betide
For those who in God's care abide.
No evil, whatsoe'er it bring
Can harm the children of the king.
It is well!

God cannot err. His way is best.
In His good purpose all are blest.
For all men 'neath His gracious care,
Who life's wide joy and sorrow share,
It is well!

WEAVING.

God sets us weaving, day by day,
With somber threads or colors gay,
Our light woof casting in and out
Neighbor or stranger lives about.

We cannot see the pattern large,

Or understand the Love in charge.
Our little plans all help to fill
The scheme, by God's o'er-ruling will.

All who had thought to mar or change,
Will wonder at the splendid range
Of theme and tinted coloring
In the pattern of His fashioning.

So in and out, where forces meet
Where life's rich good-in-ill we greet,
The warp and woof of other souls
Will grow into the gracious whole,

While we take shape and shade in turn
Like the ideal for which we yearn
The noblest pattern we may be,
Design of heavenly tapestry.

1902.

DAY IS PASSING.

"And it came to pass."

Day is passing! Day is passing!
Sings the maiden at her seam.
Youth has laid his color glowing
On her cheek; the azure gleam,
'Neath her drooping lids soft-flowing,
Tells of fancy's changing theme.
Day is passing! Night is falling!
Sweet her dream!

Day is passing! Day is passing!
Row forth blithely o'er the lake!
Youths and maidens gaily singing,
Echoes in the hills awake,
Farther and more faintly ringing.
Joy doth break with all men break
Day is passing! Night is falling!
Care forsake!

Day is passing! Day is passing!
Stands a gaunt guest at the door;
Seeks to enter as he often,
Through dark days has sought before.
Try his heart by prayer to soften!
Bid him go and come no more!
Day is passing! Night is falling!
Want, give o'er!

Day is passing! Day is passing!
Soft the silken curtain falls.
Wandering-footed wealth spends luster
On secluded haunts and halls.
Art's rare gems, from far lands cluster,
Within richly tinted walls.
Day is passing! Night is falling!
Splendor calls.

Day is passing! Day is passing!
Tossing on his couch of pain,
Seeks the sufferer some solace,
Some relief, but seeks in vain.
Who has drained pain's bitter chalice

Longs to leave its dregs of pain.
Day is passing! Night is falling!
Let sleep reign.

Day is passing! Day is passing!
Hark! The earth beneath thee quakes!
Or thy ship, storm-driven, is nearing
Where the land-borne billow breaks,
Or fire's lambent glow is bearing
Loss of which thy home partakes.
Day is passing! Night is falling!
Thy fear wakes.

Day is passing! Day is passing!
Subtle forces wield their power.
He who feels their strange beguiling
Will find faith a matchless dower
To combat their strength defiling;
God his help in that dread hour.
Day is passing! Night is falling!
Let wrong cower.

Day is passing! Day is passing!
One has fallen before the foe.
Men and angels, men and devils,
His untold abasement know.
Satan in fierce torture revels
Lays the scourge on, blow on blow.
Day is passing! Night is falling!
Sin is woe!

Day is passing! Day is passing!

Let my friend commune with me.
Swiftly life's bright day is fading,
Brighter yet if spent with thee,
Darker if its gloom is shading
Into solitude for me!
Day is passing! Night is falling!
Love must be!

Day is passing! Day is passing!
He who is thy foe to-day,
May in thee find friendship's treasure,
Bow at length beneath Love's sway,
If thou stint not kindness' measure,
And life's noblest service pay.
Day is passing! Night is falling!
Love to-day!

Day is passing! Day is passing!
Thy warm pulses beating high
Seem to say: "Life is eternal!"
Tell thee that thou shalt not die,
Till unnoted, ray supernal
Shines upon thy fading eye.
Day is passing! Night is falling!
Life's a sigh.

Day is passing! Day is passing!
Day? This day shall pass no more;
For we tread the streets of heaven,
Walking on its shadeless shore.
Bliss unreckoned! In that haven
Life and Light are, evermore.

Day is passing! Night is falling—
Nevermore!
1905.

“AS THE MOUNTAINS ARE ROUND ABOUT JERU-
SALEM, SO THE LORD IS ROUND
ABOUT HIS PEOPLE.”

High canon-wall reach up and touch the sky,
Where the soft sun-kissed clouds are slipping by!
Thy mate, the wall opposed doth reach as well
Aloft, where far-borne breezes lightly swell.
Down where the streamlet winds I am content,
Beneath each lofty sheltering battlement.
The prairie wolf may scour the empty plain,
The coyote of the blazing sun complain,
The rattle-snake its burnished coil in air
Hurl at some careless traveler passing there,
The wind lay hold of brush and arid soil,
Sweeping in willful arrogance its spoil,
The tempest come in rage and pass again,
And leave me sheltered from the storm and rain.
Here let me stay, protected safe below,
From all wild things that o'er the wild plain go.

So may Thy shelter, Heavenly Father, rise,
Like rock-ribbed rampart to the distant skies,
Standing between my soul and every ill,
Mighty, unchanging and unchangeable.
No peril of Life's wind-swept open plain,
No lurking evils of its broad domain,
No damage, seen or unseen, may prevail,

'Gainst God, the sheltering Rock that ne'er can fail.
1902.

"THOU GOD SEEST ME."

Not as children fancy, looking up,
With awe-struck faces to the silent stars,
Thinking some mystery with dreadful eye
And heart too cold and solemn to be kind,
Doth read the secret of their childish lives;
Not so.

All-knowing, but not unfeeling for the life
The purpose and the impulse of us all,
Not lacking in the touch of sympathy,
The tenderness of love, the pitying gaze,
Like that with which the human father sees
The falls and struggles of his own dear child;

He, knowing all the weakness of our dust,
The temper of the weapons which we bear,
The world we live in and the life we live,
Because He lived here 'neath our changing skies,
Because He felt our hunger, shared our toil,
He suffered illness, trouble, loss and pain,
From cankering loneliness amid the throng,
From evil rampant in the life without
And evil struggling with the life within;
With all His knowledge of this puzzled maze,
Through which humanity is struggling out
Into the perfect sunlight of His truth,
He looks with love and pity on us all,

And yet, forget it not, with justice too!
1902.

AT THY FEET.

What the world may give to me,
By its varied ministry,
Goods or fame or laurel crown,
Friendly favor, cold renown;
 Low at Thy feet, my Master,
These let me lay.

Pride of victory, honor, power,
Pageantry of passing hour,
Fullness of some pleasure draught,
Sweet or harmful when 'tis quaffed;
 Low at Thy feet, my Master,
These let me lay.

All that Thou dost ask of me,
Friendship if apart from Thee,
Olden haunts and long-trod ways,
All the length of happy days;
 Low at Thy feet, my Master,
These let me lay.

Help me love Thy will for me,
And for Thy work ready be,
Freely come or go or stay
At Thy summoning away.
 Low at Thy feet, my Master,
There let me be.

All earth's gain in golden store
Fame, love, pleasure, all and more
Can bring no true bliss to me
If they part my soul from Thee.

Low at Thy feet, my Master,
There let me be.

1903.

THE CROSS.

There was no other way than the cross
To save the world from sin;
The lonely life of pain and loss
The Saviour bore for men.

In Him there was life and light,
He was truth and peace, the way,
And through the strife, the wrong, the night
Shone His unshadowed day.

There was no other way! There was no other way!

The pathway of humble faith
Through sorrow, sin and shame
Is hallowed by His life and death,
His pure and spotless name.

There is no other way than the Cross.
The world is sin-sick still.
The Saviour's life must be lived in us.
Good must overcome the ill.

There is no other way! There is no other way!

Or still will sin's black shroud
 Envelop the brightest day,
All men be shadowed by the cloud
 Of error and decay.

Take willingly then thy cross.
 It is thine own best good
Who dares and does through wrong and loss
 Grows worthy the blest abode.

There is no other way! There is no other way!

Speed on through the darkest ways,
 Where suffers the deepest need,
With peace and healing, joy and grace,
 Give love; some day men will heed.

In the heart of the heavy cross,
 In the root of the bitter pain,
With blessing's luminous glow and gloss
 Shall thy crown win its right domain.

There is no other way! There is no other way!
1903.

“JE SENS DEUX HOMMES EN MOI.”

Thou rebel in the fortress of my life,
 What wouldst thou dare?
No more disturb me with thy constant strife,

Thy anxious care.
I will be master in my own domain,
O'er thee and me.
O'er every insurgent feeling reign,
And thus be free.

O'er yesterdays of failure and defeat
My pride bows low.
Keen are the wounds, the losses, but retreat?
My soul, no! no!
All power is given to Him who leads the way.
Humbly I bear
The stain of battle, His commands obey,
Trusting His care.

Defeat is not for faith and hope and love.
Who would attain
To all the overcomer wins above
Must hail life's pain.
No matter wounds, nor loneliness, nor shame;
Life is no more
Than a brief school to fit for use and fame
On unknown shore.

INSIGHT.

"Hast thou been so long time with me, and yet **hast**
thou not known me?"

Show me Thy love, my Master!
Oh, condescend
To spread before my hungry soul

The feast in which Thy boundless grace
And loving-kindness blend.

Show thee my love, my child?
From thy first breath
I was beside thee watching well
Thy first faint struggles, keeping my
Strong arms beneath.

I gave thee mother-love
And lullabies,
With father's care, home and a chance,
The hands to lead thee, minds to train
Through youthful days.

Around thy couch at even
Vespers rang
And red dawn called thee, sweet with dew,
Or tingling with the touch of frost,
While Nature sang.

For thee flowers gave their hues
To perfumed air,
Birds caroled, streamlets danced and ran,
Trees leaved and faded, mountains rose,
And skies were fair.

For thee earth gave her wealth
By land and sea,
Science and art paid tribute; all thy past
I gave thee and thy future hold
In trust for thee.

I gave thyself to thee;
Thy power and strength
All that thou art above the brute,
Thy wit, thy skill, thy thought, thy will
And thy day's length.

And I am at thy side.
I planned thy way
From thy first cradle-bed to the dark bier,
Through hour and day and month and year,
With love alway.

Lean on my love, my child!
Tender and strong.
How much I love? Eternity
Alone can solve the mystery.
Its years are long.

CHRISTMAS CAROL.

Baby in the manger-bed,
Cattle lowing round thy head,
Pillowed rudely on the hay,
Whence art come to us, to-day?

Men have cast thee coldly forth
From the chamber and the hearth,
And the herds heed not thy call
Wailing feebly through the stall.

Hark! The shepherds now draw near
With strange tidings of good cheer;

Heavenly glory smote the night
With a radiance soft and bright.

Angels in exultant throng
Sang for them thy cradle-song,
Which from shore to shore shall sound
Till the world in love abound.

Peace and happiness on earth
Entered with Immanuel's birth.
Hail thy coming, Holy Child,
Mortal nature undefiled!

Fear not ye, Oh sons of men,
God has come in peace again,
Unto us a Prince has given
Ruler of our purchased heaven.

Hail! The race from sin is freed,
Sons of God become indeed,
Heirs about this lowly bed
To a life unlimited.

Bow, Oh sinners, humbly bow
To your Saviour, come so low,
Sorrow, shame and death to bear,
You from shame and death to spare.

Bow in gratitude and praise,
Humble subjects of His grace.
Give the winds that gird the earth
Tidings of the Saviour's birth.

Baby in Thy manger-bed
Ages to Thy couch are led.
Ever shall Thy fame increase.
Never shall Thy praises cease.
1903.

GO TO CHRIST.

Wander no more, thou troubled, sin-tossed soul
Where thorns and briers pierce thy bleeding feet.
Struggle no more thy poor life to make whole,
For in thy Saviour thou wilt be complete.

Mourn thou no more, Oh lover of the good,
O'er darkened hours, by gloom of sin o'erborne.
Welcome the light which ere thou'st understood
Was shining on thy drooping head forlorn.

Plead thou no more, poor, willful, wayward heart
For the small power thy love-gifts to bestow.
Let love's great ocean swallow all thou art,
And bring thee peace and joy in its calm flow.

Halt thou no more, blind seeker after truth,
Where form and symbol lack inspiring power;
Let Christ anoint thine eyes and the hidden truth
Shall spring to meet thee, fresh and new, each hour.

Travail no more in grief and half-distrust ,
For those unborn, still in sin's deadly grasp.
Come to the Source of Life, the True, the Just,
And leave thy loved ones in His gentle clasp.

Oh weep no more o'er loss and wrong and sin!
Christ giveth peace, love, hope and joy eternal.
Cast all thy fears aside; by Him go in!
He is the Portal of the Life Supernal.
1903.

"I STAND AT THE DOOR AND KNOCK."

"The door is shut."

"But I would enter in.

I have good news that I must bring to thee,
Unskilled I am to win thy grace to me,
But I bear precious, priceless news for thee;
On let me in."

"My greeting and farewell."

"The door is shut.

And shall I knock again?

"Come in." The entrance stands wide-flung before,
The sunshine of my gardens warms me more,
The ivy greets me wound about my door."
But to enter is in vain.

The heart is shut! is shut!

Years into years roll on,

Till joy or trouble, common meeting-ground
Arouse the sought and seeker to the round
Full mutual use of life, by great need found
Long empty ways upon.

No heart is shut forever. Keep up faith!
Love may be cherished, sunny days or dark
Till the free path opens where long love may work,
And heaven's portal yields to the key of faith.

So enters Christ. So you may enter too.
He sends you forth this pain to undergo,
These unrequited days of loss to know,
His golden seed with weeping eyes to sow,
With grace for you, for you.
1904.

FAILURE.

Low bows the head; still lower
On outspread hands the troubled forehead lies.
The cup of fate is bitter;
It overflows for the unseeing eyes.

Who has the balm for failure?
The best beloved have averted looks.
The whole world turns to others;
The lifeless present no to-morrow brooks.

A breathless voice is speaking
Words that fall formless on unhearing ears.
A shade less gloomy passes
Over a face despondent beyond tears.

"What seekest thou of being?
Is it calm days, full sheaves and treasures?
Must men look upward alway.

At thee a star, far from earth's drudgeries?

"Life is for thorns, not crowns,
For common use and growth and ministry.
Some men, sometime are leaders;
Most worth at last are love and the seeing eye.

"Break with an ease-bound present,
With servitude for hearth and hall and store.
There is no good like manhood,
Who dares for truth and right to go before?

"The smile or pastime frowning
Of a too-idle world be naught to thee.
God guards success and failure.
Where He sends go! There peace and love will be."

TRUTH.

No pearl of price by Persian divers found,
No gem within a queenly coronet,
No priceless jewel in the earth's whole round
Can match thy glowing splendor, justice-set.

But cast aside in refuse heaps of wrong,
Or scorned where honor is thy heaven-born right,
A jest and by-word or contemptuous song
Thy common meed is oft in human sight.

I speak for thee my humble praises, Truth,
Like knight of old, thy favor as my crest,
Defend thee as I may through wrong and ruth,

Seeking to clasp thy treasure to my breast.

And if by simply speaking what is true,
Amid the clangor of seductive words,
The times' brave knighthood shall revere thee too,
Sweet will the joy be that thy worth affords.

Truth shall be known in every bare outline
Some day; the everlasting, changeless fact.
The Eternal wields it with a power divine.
Sharp as Damascus blade, for Him 'twill act.

I would walk in thy path, eternal Truth.
I hail thee, mighty force of years to-be,
With praise for thine immortal splendid youth;
With reverence for thine august majesty.
1904.

GONE.

Gone into the silent night,
With its blessing and its blight,
With its blistering rain of tears,
Rapturous hope and blanching fears,
With its promise and its pain,
Days of sun and days of rain,
Good that glows like sunset ray,
Evil darkening the day,
Work that weaves the web of things,
Fancy with its sound of wings,
Vision with the grand to-be
Reaching to eternity;

Spring-time mellow with the showers,
Summer with its wild-wood bowers,
Autumn with its rain-bow hues,
Winter that new life endues,
Hope that reaches to the sky,
Love that spreads a canopy
Cool, entrancing, full of cheer
O'er the changes of the year;
Gone with moments, hours, and days
Are the old year's ministries.
God who makes all life complete,
With His presence strong and sweet,
Greater good will give to men,
When the New Year enters in.

THE QUEST.



THE QUEST.

The jubilant chorus of heaven was hushed for a space, for the
Master
Was stooping in merciful sympathy from the throne's scintillant
splendor,
To gaze on the face of a beautiful woman whose pure eyes be-
sought Him
To heed her brave pleading.

She stood there before Him she worshipped
supremely,
Through whose faithful aid in the long years of turbulent life in
her earth-home,
She triumphed by faith that beheld the unseen, while in patience
she labored,
By prayer that had woven her soul with intangible bands to her
Saviour,
In struggle and pain and temptation which her changeless love
had defeated.

Her friends were about her; the friends of her light-winged
innocent childhood,
The friends of her youth who had braved all the fierce darts of
evil and passed them,
The friends of her womanhood, who in their prime's hard-fought
battle had triumphed.

Some faces, long-cherished, she looked for in vain, while a
shadow that softened
To calmness the radiant pleasures of heaven enveloped her spirit.

Her heart had been cheered by the absent, her life had reached
 blooming and fruitage
Through one and another whose presence in great inexpressible
 conflicts
Had helped her or hindered; had urged her to stand in some terrible crisis
Or left her to faint for the lack of the comradeship found in a
 hand-clasp,
Or cheer of the eyes' gleam. Long days she had sought for the
 faces of loved ones
Choice gems in the coronal priceless, close woven by love's sweet
 attraction.
She loved as they love who have long felt the merciful eyes of
 the Master,
She loved with the heart of the shepherd who seeks the lost
 sheep on the mountains,
She loved with a vision that saw in the carbon the radiant diamond,
Nor could she forego, Christ consenting, the joy of love's limitless treasure.

She knelt at the feet of her Saviour with eyes that were founts
 of devotion.
And while gracious rays from the jubilant hosts beamed upon
 her calm features,
The unspoken wish of her soul reached the infinite heart of the
 Blessed.

There throbbed in His hands once again the fierce wounds from
 the nail-prints,
The feeling of thirst which no water could quench came upon
 Him,

The wilderness' torment, the mountain-top loneliness, hate's
fierce reviling,
And love's mighty deep that engulfed and enveloped all men in
its waters.

"He is absent, Thou knowest dear Saviour. Could love in its
purity reach him? .

"My child, the soul goes to its place." full of infinite pity, He
answered.

"But goodness had room in him also, the love of his kind, the
fine scorning
Of baseness and wrong in himself and in others; Thou knowest,
Almighty."

The prayer of her heart brought long pleas of the past by the
calm lips unspoken.

"Thou knowest not, woman," he said, "the strange evils and
snares to encounter."

"But Thou wilt in consenting be with me, my Lord, and no danger
has terror,

In kingdoms of darkness and evil, whatever their forces malign-
ant,

With Thy hand in mine and Thy love my soul's courage restor-
ing."

"Thy friendships, companionships, blossoming here to life's high-
est expression,

The free interchange of choice thoughts with the souls that en-
chant thy strong spirit,

Thine increase in knowledge celestial, thy pleasure in art's gra-

cious visions,
Thou seeker of all that is rarest and purest, like lark sweeping
skyward;
These must thou forego."

"I will leave them all." So from her
lips came the answer.

"Then go and My presence attend thee,"
the Saviour replied, knowing all things.

Then burst from the harpers' skilled fingers a tumult of heavenly
music,
As forth from the throne's dazzling peace passed the woman in
confident calmness.

Her farewells were greeted with clamor, with manifold protests
and pleading.

"Belovéd," she said, "ye may spend endless years in companion-
ship with me,

But he might remain to the glories of heaven forever a stranger
If I should neglect to obey my heart's solemn and sweet admon-
ition,

And go not to search the unknown unto space's far ends for my
absent

Belovéd and bring him to share in the comradeship blessed of
heaven."

"Eternity waits your return, sweetest sister," they answered
and added,

"But now we shall want your dear presence and find heaven
lonely without you."

She slipped from the gate into silence with soft tender sym-

phonies mingled,
For still from the city celestial the beautiful music resounded,
Afar now and faint as the tones of the vesper from convent embowered,
In woods on the hill, high and silent, from life's common trouble divided.

She slipped into silence so still that the sounds which were not seemed to mock her
With empty half-muttered vagaries that were not of earth or of heaven.
She paused in the stillness about her beyond heaven's happy dominion,
Then went forward; there rose on her ear, horrid sounds of the fiercest teeth-gnashing,
The barking of dogs, the harsh out-cries of wicked and wild unbelievers,
Shrewd sorcerers' tones, skilled in magic that hood-winks the dull and unthinking,
Idolators' vain repetitions and many a low miserère,
And medleys of discordant voices from whore-mongers' tongues, all united
Assailing with horror and terror the innocent ears of the woman

Still firm was the clasp of the Blessed, and passing the throng, blind with madness,
Led on by the Presence benign, far beyond the last droppings of glory,
She entered a region of shadow, of clouds and of gloom unilluminated.
She feared not for knowledge of heaven and faith's inexhaustible treasure

Had steadied her soul, for no gloom was too great for the care of
the Blessed.

Her Lord had not promised her quest should be crowned with
successful attainment;
The faith that the Christ would attend her and shelter her
where'er she wandered,
Was the favor she bore on her way into solitudes gloomy and
pathless.

Afar through dim spaces of ether she sped on her perilous
journey.
The stars were her comrades, the suns with their bright con-
stellations,
But often the shadows of spheres scattered gloom o'er the way
she had chosen.

Sometimes the swift whirr of a wing in the dimness betokened
the passage
Of someone on unknown commission, mute messenger steadily
flitting
Away into vast viewless spaces, a Mercury silent and solemn.
Sometimes through the palpable ether, her soul caught the tone
of a spirit
Fresh dropped from the bright hills of heaven, betrayed by the
sweet thoughts it scattered,
And sometimes there loomed through the shadows like wreck of
a vessel dismantled,
The shape of a sinister creature, grown grisly by gruesome accre-
tions,
And sometimes by twos or by companies passed the bright,
heavenly spirits,

And often in groups or in cohorts the wicked passed on their
base errands.

She needed no keen-seeing prophet to point out the good and the
evil,

She knew them as oft does a seer, or an innocent child in the
earth-life

Supplied with intangible fingers whose tips touch life's secrecies
hidden.

Her heart sent glad thoughts, wingéd messages forth to the
friends from her home-land,

But she fled from the way into solitude when Satan's hosts were
advancing.

Through mazes of unnumbered spheres, threading passage-ways
deviously winding,

She followed the way of the Blessed, not knowing the paths of
the future,

But trusting His care all the way through the untrodden deserts
of ether.

Of this she was certain; there is an abyss which no heaven-born
can traverse;

She knew that its high buttressed bulwarks are stronger and
firmer than matter,

Carved out by imperious will choosing selfhood and evil forever.
This gulf limits Satan's dominions with bastions more fatal and
final

Than granite with iron bars welded or adamant's unbroken
masses.

She trusted the heart of the Christ; she believed His love would

have restrained her,
If past the sheer walls of the bottomless depth slept her hopeless
beloved.
"He had good in his nature," she said, "nor would pass the gulf's
sulphurous odors,
Its lightnings, its thunders and flame, and its mockings and hiss-
ings eternal."

She passed by the sphere where the children of those she had
known in the earth-land
Were dwelling; sweet gems of the home, torn away from their
setting forever,
And borne by the shining Death-angel, to this happy land of the
children,
To grow in the care of the Blessed to fullness of wisdom and
stature.
Not there would she find him.

Again through the great silent spaces
she journeyed,
And came to the land of the heathen, not knowing how Christ
lived and suffered,
And hung on the Cross for their sakes as for ours who neglected
to tell them;
The aliens who languished for knowledge of Christ and His
willing forgiveness,
Who groped upon earth for the light and through shadow and
sorrow pursued it,
Now learning in happier state of the nature and life of the
Saviour.

The unnumbered dead of all imperfect creeds in their strange
habitations,

Who followed the good by the light that they had, had their homes in the heavens.

At times they communed with her spirit, now fair beyond earthly conception,

And keen to discern all of life; thus she knew of the powers about her,

And to all she presented her quest as she journeyed afar through the heavens.

Long, long was her seeking in vain and the evils that often assailed her

Waxed gross as the seasons revolved and she found not the end of her journey.

The news of her search had gone forth to the realms of the ruler infernal.

He swore with a venomous oath as he gathered his councilors round him,

That she who had braved the unknown through the dangerous highways of ether

Should learn that the forces of Hades defied the attacks of the righteous,

That those who had slipped down the years to the borders of regions infernal

Must yield to the claim and the power of the terrible Master of evil.

The chief counceled then with his minions how best to make way with the woman.

"Send first," urged the dark shade of Alva the cruel, "a terror-clad cohort

Of devils with threatening snares to entrap her, with sharp hooks

to rend her."

"Well spoken!" the chief replied, "Forth to your victim, ye resolute hunters!"

Away at his word swept the cohort on swift-footed, fire-breathing dragons.

They rushed on the woman with fury, but firm was the hand of the Blessed,

And fear that had caught at her throat, loosed its grasp when the magical circle

Of power divine forced her enemies back and destroyed the fierce dragons.

"Send lightnings and flames from the pit," spoke the shade of the home-burner, Nero.

"So do!" replied Satan with gnashing of teeth at the loss of his dragons;

And high in the ether with thunder and hail rose the flames and vile vapors,

But the care of the Blessed made pure as salubrious zephyrs of heaven

The air that surrounded the woman and she was at ease and uninjured.

"Send some saintly-garbed cavalier seeking friendship, companionship, service

Of her in her obstinate quest." So spoke Machiavelli, the crafty. And Satan complied and the hypocrite sought by all charms to allure her;

But the eye of the Blessed was on her; no subtle enticement could snare her.

She reached, after manifold evil, the twilighted land of the

doubters,
Whose halting in faithful obedience had blinded their eyes to
high visions,
Whose search after luxury, ease and enjoyment, had lost to them
wholly
The right to an entrance, unchecked, at the gate of the heavenly
city.
Here hypocrites were, the deceivers who thought by the cloak of
their boasting,
To cover the sore spots of sin and attain earth and heaven to-
gether.
Here passionate seekers of pleasure were, heedless of heavenly
summons,
Enveloped by soft fickle breezes, flung forth by the joy of the
moment,
While many neglecting the call with the lofty commission of
duty,
Hoped here by the mild ways of ease to attain the great ends of
endeavor.
But none in this twilighted region where all things were dim and
uncertain,
Had turned once for all from the good or embraced with full
passion the evil,
And none in this region of darkness had found in the earth-life
full vision
And facing it chosen the wrong as their ultimate end of en-
deavor.

The hand of the Just seemed to guide her by grades imperceptible
forward
To the vapors that hung o'er the land of these vague-minded
ignorant seekers,

These haphazard lovers of good, vapid self-seekers nourishing evil.

The woman was saddened at heart as she saw the dark land she must enter.

"Is he here in this desolate country, my poor blind beloved?" she questioned.

The Blessed vouchsafed her no answer, but strongly her spirit prophetic

Foretold the dear presence she sought in the dim-lying ways full of shadow.

She put on the garb of the land as each one is obliged to who enters.

Yet bright with the glory celestial, her undaunted spirit illumined The way that she traveled. The face that she left heaven to search for was nearing.

She saw him from far. The soft radiance that shone forth about her grew somber

From his presence, his sternness, his coldness, the lack of calm hope in his features.

His head was bowed. Long disappointment at failures and losses had changed him.

At times hate dropped shadows malignant upon his once kind, friendly features.

He saw the soft gleam of strange garments and looked in surprise at the woman.

A shade of some long-past emotion swept over his features and vanished.

"Are you here?" he asked and astonishment mounted o'er all other feelings.

"I am here," she said calmly; then gathering all her soul's forces

and graces;

"I came to find you for the sake of the love I have borne you, the blessing

You brought in the earth-life, the pain and the good, over all else triumphant."

"You came—" long he gazed, filled with mingled emotions, his heart seeking reasons.

At one with the dim life around him, so trivial, self-seeking, unloving;

"You loved—In all truth I know not any reason for this visitation;

What would you of me?"

"I have missed you in realms of the

Blessed with sorrow.

I was not content for I thought you must still love the good as aforetime,

When walking the fair fields of earth we discussed the strange questions of being.

I sought from the Master permission to pass the bright portals of heaven,

And since through the wide fields of space I have sought the strange land of your sojourn."

"You sought me, but why did you seek me? Each man seeks and loves his own blessing,

Your weal by all omens is there whence your garments have gotten their brilliance—

Sought me when the people of heaven are said to be happy and noble?

"I know not the inmates of heaven, nor their far-off land, but am

groping

At times still, but faintly and rarely, for that which is better;
the odors

Of Hades, it seems, are so near us that hell is more real than
heaven,

That doubtful deeds darken the vision and sin is more real than
goodness;

Yes wrong—right, what are they, fair lady? I know not if such
things are phantoms;

I know not.

What wish you of me, long a stranger? My
friends are delightful

Or hateful as happens. I loved you once. Now I know little true
loving."

The woman's eyes darkened with tears, not the fierce tears of
anger and hatred

Well-known to the man, but the slow tears of sorrowful love;
at the vision

A thought caught the unseeing dreamer at throat, like a hand
all-compelling.

"Come with me," he said, "share my life and my pleasures, enjoy
my companions."

Beneath the wild wish to persuade her to quaff with him goblets
of pleasure

That bitterness held in the dregs, was the unuttered feeling that
never

Would she whose face beamed with pure goodness, be snared by
allurements debasing,

Though he should present them for whom she had shown such
affection; but ever

Opposed to the powerful plea of her life to his own better nature
Were depths of unmastered emotions and tendencies cherishing
evil

That always restrained him from yielding his will to the highest
requirements.

And worshipping God as his sovereign in humble repentant de-
votion.

The potent attraction of kinship that made them remember each
other

Through distance and long separation, exerted a fresh force and
vigor.

Enough of the beautiful lay in that dull, almost desolate region
To furnish large interests still to the mind and the heart's quick
emotion,

For vigorous choices of will and for work's many ends and en-
deavors.

The woman who left heaven to win him could give no aid save
as she reached him

Through ideals he had adopted that led on to good undertakings.
She stood with him thus in his life, hand to hand and with
heavenly patience,

She sought to make free his chained thoughts from the fleeting
attractions about him,

While she added to forces of goodness the sweet charms of love
and of beauty.

She bore with temptations for thus there was need, and o'ercame
them,

Unshrinkingly bore harsh revilings and faced fleeting hate with
affection.

The turbulent strife in the man between goodness and evil now
centered

About the sweet face of this woman who wakened high thoughts
and ambitions

Although she demanded surrenders to habits of long years dis-
tasteful.

Upon the gay lives of his comrades, fast sinking to dissolute ruin
Her beautiful spirit reacted and stirred them to good resolutions.

He would not have said she was winning; to yield to a healthier
nature

Or nobler or sweeter or any at all, this his selfish soul hated.

But born of the sweet in her smile, or the sadness by waiting
enkindled

Was a will unacknowledged to please her who suffered unkind-
ness so humbly.

The wide horn of unfriendly years of her servitude slowly was
emptied.

The citadel still was not taken, long guarded by habitudes hostile.
Though struggled with often by love, the young giant that lay in
the stronghold.

The woman had trod every path to his heart by the aid of the
Blessed;

Had done all a lover's heart could; there was need of experience
bitter,

Of the love-barren life, half forgotten to waken the sinner from
slumber.

God called her then, "Daughter, come home; thou hast served
to the utmost, Belovéd."

With eyes that still sought for the best in the features, relin-

quished so loathly,
She went, and the long years and distance were brief as an hour
as she passed them.

The portals of heaven were wide when she came and the jubilant
harpers
Swept the strings into harmonies sweeter than words to ac-
knowledge her coming.

The man's heart rebelled, sad and grieved at the loss of his
beautiful comrade.
He was hurt and defiant at the changeless Power which had
coldly bereft him.
But all she had been to his life, filled his heart still with un-
measured gladness;
The years spent with her made all other years poor by the con-
trast and empty.
They spoke to his soul of that heaven to which he believed she
had vanished,
From which she had come for his sake, though her service was
still unavailing.

"But why unavailing?" he thought as he sat in his shadow of
sorrow,
"If I will I may go to her yet, breaking all these harsh fetters
that bind me,
Through the grace which may surely be mine as 'twas hers, fully
trusting and taking."

With deep, inexpressible longing he yearned for the dear, van-
ished presence.
At last he could bear it no longer. He turned to the love of the
Saviour.

The pardon and solace foregone through the unsubdued years of
the earth-life,
For want of which he had slipped down to the dim-visioned land
of the doubters,
Were freely, abundantly given with Light which would yet guide
him upward.
Thus righteousness mastered his soul and he struggled through
seasons of service
To win those about him as well, to the glory he languished to
enter.
Some caught, through his wisdom, a glimpse of the good and the
blessing that waited
Where right led the way, and beside him sought also the far away
heaven.

At length, when his service was done, the all-merciful care of the
Blessed
Sent again his beloved to ease for his feet the fair journey long-
hindered,
A free way at last since to conquering love he surrendered.

The warm light of heaven shone forth as they swept through the
ether's calm spaces.
The loud hallelujahs touched sweetly their spirits at peace and
ecstatic.
The dear Master's welcome and sweet commendation were ming-
led in greeting,
And friends, heaven-born, circled round them, renewing dear ties
with their meeting.
Eternity lay in its silences, pregnant, potential before them,
While Love's choicest gift of companionship circled and bound
them.







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